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ABSTRACT

The materials compiled into this information package focus on women and girls with disabilities and the specific issues they face in society. Part 1 contains the overview article "Obstacles to Equality: The Double Discrimination of Women with Disabilities" (Rannveig Traustadottir), which reviews the existing literature on women with disabilities and compares how women with disabilities fare in the traditional female sphere of reproduction and nurturing, education, and employment as compared to women without disabilities and men with disabilities. Part 2 is an annotated listing of resources written by and/or about women and girls with disabilities. Subjects in this section include general issues, life histories, education, employment and rehabilitation, health issues, women and care, motherhood and reproductive rights, sexuality, sexual abuse, and fiction. Part 3 provides information on teaching materials about women and girls with disabilities. This part also lists other practical materials, such as a manual for accessibility. Part 4 provides information about support groups for women and girls with disabilities and how to start networking projects. This section also contains information about women's periodicals and organizations which include women with disabilities. Part 5 provides information about women and disability that is available on the Internet. (CR)

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WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES:
Issues, Resources, Connections
Revised

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The materials in this information packet were compiled for anyone interested in learning about the lives of women and girls with disabilities.

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WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES:
Issues, Resources, Connections
Revised

Preface

The materials that have been compiled into this information package are intended to serve as an introduction for those who are interested in learning about the lives of women and girls with disabilities and the specific issues they face in today's society. The review of the material already available about women with disabilities reveals a new and growing body of literature, most of which as been published within the past decade. These writings cross disciplines and have been published within different fields of study making it hard to gain overview of what already exists and even harder to know where to look for these materials. In addition to introducing the lives and experiences of women with disabilities, the primary purpose of this package is to provide an overview of the existing materials in an attempt to make them more accessible to those who are interested in this topic.

This package is divided into five parts. PART I, written by Rannveig Traustadottir, contains an article which provides an overview of the literature and some of the major issues facing women with disabilities in today's society. PART II is an annotated listing of resources written by and/or about women and girls with disabilities. Subjects in this section include general issues, life histories and personal accounts, education, employment and rehabilitation, health issues, women and care, motherhood and reproductive rights, sexuality, sexual abuse, and fiction. PART III provides information about teaching materials about women and girls with disabilities. This part also lists other practical materials, such as a manual for accessibility. PART IV, Building Connections, provides information about where to find services and support groups for women and girls with disabilities and how to start networking projects. This section also contains information about women's periodicals and organizations which include women with disabilities. PART V is a new section which provides information about women and disability that is available on the internet.

Perri Harris
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June 1997

PART I

Obstacles to Equality: The Double Discrimination of Women with Disabilities

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Overview Article:

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INTRODUCTION

People with disabilities face many obstacles in their struggle for equality. Although men and women with disabilities are subject to discrimination because of their disabilities, women with disabilities are at a further disadvantage because of the combined discrimination based on gender and discrimination based on disability. This paper examines the lives of women with disabilities and explores the effects of this double discrimination. It demonstrates how women with disabilities have been neglected by the disability field and the feminist movement alike and reviews the existing literature on women with disabilities, most of which has been written within the last decade. The paper will also examine three major areas of life and how women with disabilities fare within these areas, compared to women without disabilities and men with disabilities. These three areas are (1) the traditional female sphere of reproduction and nurturing; (2) education; and (3) employment.

HISTORY OF NEGLECT

Women with disabilities have historically been neglected by disability studies and feminist scholarship alike and issues of importance to women with disabilities have, for the most part, been ignored by the disability rights movement as well as the women's movement.

The Disability Field

Almost all research on people with disabilities has assumed the irrelevance of gender as well as other social dimensions such as social class, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. 'Having a disability presumably eclipses these dimensions of social experience. Even sensitive students of disability...have focused on disability as a unitary concept and have taken it to be not merely the 'master' status, but apparently the exclusive status for disabled people' (Asch & Fine, 1988: 3).

Disability studies have traditionally used a gender blind approach to examine the lives of people with disabilities and have neglected to explore the influence of gender in the lives of men and women with disabilities. The field of disability has not yet recognized the combined discrimination of gender and disability experienced by women who have disabilities, and policies and practices in the field have not been designed to meet the specific needs of women with disabilities (Asch & Fine, 1988; Kutza, 1985; Mudrick, 1988).

The disability rights movement has also ignored issues of importance to women with disabilities and many feminists with disabilities have complained about its male domination and male orientation (Blackwell-Stratton, et al., 1988; Toews, 1985). Deegan and Brooks (1985: 1) have criticized the disability rights movement for directing most of its attention to male concerns while women's issues, such as child-bearing problems, have received little attention. They point out that, 'Like many other social change movements, the disability movement has often directed its energies toward primarily male experiences.' This makes many feminists with disabilities uneasy members of the disability rights movements, for example, Israel and McPherson (1983: 20), who describe how 'Disabled feminists...feel uncomfortable in the disability movement because it is often male dominated and at times blatantly sexist.'

The Feminist Movement

In addition to being ignored by those concerned with disability, women with disabilities have been ignored by the feminist movement. Feminists with disabilities have criticized feminist scholarship for excluding the experiences of women with disabilities from feminist analysis (Fine & Asch, 1988; Hannaford, 1985). Even feminist scholarship that has most thoughtfully attempted to integrate the diversity of female experience based on race, class, sexual orientation, and other social dimensions (e.g., Eisenstein & Jardine, 1985) has excluded women with disabilities. Recent criticism of exclusion in feminist thought and calls for accounting for differences among women continue to ignore and exclude women with disabilities (e.g., Spelman, 1988). Published writings about women with disabilities have not received attention from feminist scholars, '...instead they have joined men in relegating women with disabilities to a realm beneath their intellectual and political ken' (Asch & Fine, 1988: 4).

Women with disabilities have described their exclusion from the women's movements because meetings and conferences are typically held in inaccessible places (Israel, 1985). In addition, materials are usually available in print only, not in Braille or on tape, and sign language interpretation is rarely offered. Mary Jane Owen (1986; 1988), a scholar who became blind in adulthood, has written sarcastic accounts of her frustrations when the feminist scholarship she was used to reading was no longer available to her because it did not exist on tape or in Braille.

Not only has the women's movement been criticized for being physically inaccessible to women with disabilities, it has also been criticized for ignoring the issues facing women with disabilities in general (Blackwell-Stratton et al., 1988; Davis, 1987; Finger, 1985) and women with mental retardation in particular (Boyle et al., 1988; Sank & Lafleche, 1981). Some feminists with disabilities have found the lesbian movement to be more accepting than the women's movement in general. For example, Israel and McPherson (1983: 21) claim that within the feminist movement, "Nondisabled lesbian feminists have been more sensitive than heterosexual feminists...in responding to the needs of disabled women at their conferences and events."

Women with disabilities are typically seen as helpless, childlike, dependent, needy, victimized, and passive. They therefore reinforce traditional stereotypes of women. Asch and Fine (1988: 4) suggest this may be one of the reasons why women with disabilities have been excluded from the women's movement. They suggest, "...non-disabled feminists have severed them from the sisterhood in an effort to advance more powerful, competent, and appealing female icons."

A DECADE OF WRITINGS

Anyone looking for materials about women with disabilities a few years back would have found little to read. Although there is still much to be learned about the particular situation of women with disabilities, the past decade has been characterized by vigorous writing, mostly by women who themselves have disabilities. This section will provide a brief overview of some of this new and growing body of literature.

The overwhelming majority of the writings on women with disabilities have been published within the past decade. The year 1981 was a turning point. That year a number of publications addressed the lives of women with disabilities, among them a British anthology edited by Jo Campling (1981) containing the writings of 23 women with disabilities describing their lives and experiences of being female and having a disability. The same year, Duffy (1981) published a book about the sexuality of women with disabilities that is still hailed as one of the best writings on the subject. In May of 1981 the feminist journal Off Our Backs devoted a whole issue to women with disabilities and later the same year the Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare published an issue devoted to the theme 'Women and disability: The double handicap.' This issue included an article by Fine and Asch (1981), 'Disabled women: Sexism without the pedestal.' Their conceptualization of women with disabilities as 'roleless' has had a significant influence and gained much note in subsequent literature.

In 1983 another scholarly journal, the Journal of Visual Impairments and Blindness, devoted an entire issue to women with disabilities. The same year a book based on interviews with 45 women with disabilities was published in Canada. The author, Gwyneth Matthews (1983), has a physical disability and the book is a mixture of her autobiography and the interviews. In 1984 the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped published a report (Bowe, 1984) containing statistical information about women with disabilities that clearly demonstrated the disadvantaged status of women with disabilities in terms of education, employment, and income, compared to both their male counterparts and non-disabled women. An edited volume addressing the major issues for women in mental health was published in 1984 (Walker, 1984) and two feminist books focusing on health issues included women with disabilities. The new our bodies, ourselves (Boston Women's Health Book Collective, 1984) was published in a new edition which incorporated a disability perspective into most chapters and an edited volume on reproductive technologies, Test tube women: What future for motherhood? (Arditti, Klein, & Minden, 1984), which included chapters by women with disabilities where they discuss, among other things, the moral dilemma between disability rights and reproductive rights.

In 1985 the first major collection of scholarly writings about women with disabilities was published (Deegan & Brooks, 1985). The eleven chapters in this volume focus on the double minority status of women with disabilities, the lack of information about their lives and experiences, and the need to change the conditions that perpetuate the structural inequality women with disabilities experience. The book's conceptualization around women with disabilities as a multiple minority group has had significant influence on other people's thinking and writing. The year 1985 also saw a collection of essays written by Susan Hannaford (1985), a feminist and disability rights activist, and a collection of essays, poetry, and first-person accounts by women with disabilities (Browne, Connors, & Stern, 1985). In 1987, Saxton and Howe edited an anthology of literature by and about women with disabilities with more literary ambition than previous anthologies, resulting in a collection of writings of high literary quality.

In 1988, a second edited volume of scholarly writings about women with disabilities was published. The authors of this volume, Fine and Asch (1988), have been among the leading scholars in this area and their volume is the most comprehensive edited collection of scholarly writings about women with disabilities to date.

Disabled, Female, and Proud!, a book providing positive role models for women and girls with disabilities was published in 1988. The book is edited by Rousso (1988) and contains stories of ten contemporary women with disabilities who have "made it" and can serve as role models for other women with disabilities. The first comprehensive book on sexual abuse of women and children with mental retardation was published in Canada in 1988 (Senn, 1988) documenting the extreme vulnerability of this group and high incidents of abuse. Also published in 1988 was, Why can't Sharon Kowalski come home? (Thompson & Andrezejewski, 1988). The book tells the story of a lesbian couple, one of whom becomes disabled in a car accident, and has directed attention to the vulnerability of lesbian women with disabilities because of the combined oppression of handicapism, sexism, and homophobia.

Characteristics of the Literature

The major characteristic of the literature on women with disabilities is its diversity. This literature crosses disciplines and politics, and is often interdisciplinary in nature. It reflects the diversity in the lives of women with disabilities presented by the type and severity of their disability, the wide variety of issues it addresses, as well as diversity along social dimensions such as class, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.

The largest part of the literature about women with disabilities has been written by themselves and a substantial part consists of their personal accounts of being female and having a disability. Some speak out in anger and bitterness of the isolation, despair, poverty, and powerlessness, while others celebrate achievements, strength, happiness, and fulfillment, despite their struggles.

Although research in this area is relatively new, the writings of the past decade have provided research-based information about the social, economic, and psychological circumstances of women with disabilities along with theoretical analysis providing a framework to understand and interpret their lives and experiences. Much of the scholarly writing has been devoted to identifying the barriers women with disabilities face in today's society and has documented that they fare less well than both men with disabilities and non-disabled women in education and employment; in receiving economic security and social support; and in their access to sexuality and intimacy.

The major factor unifying the scholarly writings is the conceptualization of women with disabilities as a group with a multiple minority status. This scholarship typically combines disability studies and feminist studies to explore the combined discrimination based on disability and gender. Some authors have characterized women with disabilities as 'roleless' because of the limited social roles available for them and the absence of institutional means to achieve valued adult roles.

Women with disabilities are not seen as fit to fill the traditional roles of a mother, wife, homemaker, nurturer, or lover and economically productive roles are not seen as appropriate for them either.

The existing literature on women with disabilities is somewhat limited in scope because, with a few but significant exceptions, it has been overly focused on women who have physical disabilities. Women with developmental disabilities and mental health problems have been underrepresented in the literature. In addition, despite an attempt to incorporate diversity in terms of race, ethnicity, and class, women of color still remain underrepresented. Although somewhat limited, this new and exciting body of literature provides the basis for further advances, more refined theoretical analysis, and a better understanding of the lives of women with disabilities.

The remaining sections will examine three major areas of life and how women with disabilities fare within these areas, compared to women without disabilities and men with disabilities. These three areas are the traditional female sphere of reproduction and nurturing; education; and employment.

MARRIAGE, NURTURANCE, SEXUALITY, REPRODUCTION

Women's traditional roles as nurturers, mothers, wives, homemakers, and lovers are usually not seen as appropriate for women with disabilities. While the ability to acquire women's most traditional roles is usually not regarded as the best measure of women's social success, examining the limitations women with disabilities face within this traditional women's sphere provides valuable insights into the restricted social options available to them.

Intimacy and Marriage

Compared to both men with disabilities and non-disabled women, women with disabilities are more likely to never marry, marry later, and be divorced if they do get married (Asch & Fine, 1988; Hannaford, 1989; Simon, 1988). While 60% of non-disabled women and men with disabilities are married, only 49% of women with disabilities are married (Bowe, 1984). Comparison of divorce rates of women and men with disabilities seem to suggest that women with disabilities are more likely to be left alone than men (Fine & Asch, 1981) and when disability occurs after marriage men are much more likely to divorce their wives who become disabled, while the marriage rarely breaks down if it is the man who becomes disabled (Hannaford, 1989). These realities are reflected in the writings where women with disabilities describe their lives. For example, only five of the forty-five women interviewed by Matthews (1983) were married and there is hardly a mention of marriage in a collection of first-person accounts written by more than sixty women (Browne, Connors, & Stern, 1985). Asch and Fine (1988: 15) report only one group of women with disabilities that is more likely to be married than men of the same disability group. This group is women with mental retardation.

Non-disabled women often feel trapped in unfulfilling or abusive relationships because they cannot imagine how they will survive economically on their own. Hannaford (1989) suggests that this may be even more true of women with disabilities who often may have to put up with abusive or exploitative relationships because of their limited social and economical means or because the only other alternative may be a life in an institution. In addition, Asch and Fine (1988) report that women with disabilities may return to abusive relationships because it may be the only intimate relationship they ever had and they may judge it better to have a bad relationship than no relationship at all.

Although non-disabled lesbians have been reported to be more accepting of women with disabilities within their meetings and conferences (Israel & McPherson, 1983), the literature seems to indicate that lesbians with disabilities have the same difficulties as heterosexual women with disabilities in establishing intimate, long-lasting relationships with a partner (Asch & Fine, 1988).

Many women may not see marriage as a preferred status, nor may they regard the most traditional female roles as desirable. At the same time, non-disabled women are more likely than women with disabilities to have the possibilities to choose between traditional and nontraditional life-styles. Women with disabilities rarely have the same options and their access to even the most traditional female roles is very restricted.

Motherhood and Nurturance

Although the traditional image of the mother as the sole caretaker and nurturer of her child is in the process of change, it is still the image society uses as its reference point. Since women with disabilities are seen as dependent and in need of being taken care of, it is difficult for many to imagine how a mother with a disability can fill the caring and nurturing mothering role (Shaul, Dowling, & Laden, 1985). The widespread belief that women with disabilities cannot and should not bear and raise children has made it difficult for pregnant women with disabilities to find doctors who will accept them. They have also found it problematic to gain access to information and services related to their special needs (Finger, 1985; Women and Disability Awareness Project, 1989). When women with disabilities do become mothers they encounter many difficulties because the non-disabled world assumes that the disability makes them unfit to be mothers. Many lose custody of their children in divorce while others may have their children removed from their care by social welfare agencies, solely on the grounds that they have a disability (Corbett, 1989). Not only have women with disabilities reported difficulties in becoming biological mothers and keeping custody of their own children, they have also encountered discrimination if they have attempted to adopt children or become foster mothers (Asch and Fine, 1988; Finger, 1985). If they manage to keep their children they may encounter further difficulties in dealing with early childhood programs that traditionally have neglected and ignored the needs of mothers with disabilities.

There are only scattered accounts of motherhood as experienced by women with disabilities. These accounts have mostly been written by women who have physical disabilities (Anderson, 1985; Hyler, 1985; LeMaistre, 1985; Roth, 1981), or based on interviews with this group of mothers (Shaul, Dowling, & Laden, 1985). Mothers with mental retardation have not been represented in this literature, and as a result these mothers are even more invisible than other mothers with disabilities and very little is known about their lives and struggles. The limited information available has been written by professionals who tend to discuss mothers with mental retardation in terms of the problems they pose for the social welfare services that encounter them (Budd & Greenspan, 1985; Shilling, et al., 1982; Whitman & Accardo, 1990). Few, if any, resources are available that presents their own point of view and how they experience motherhood. One of the few resources available about this group of mothers found that 25% of them had had their children removed from their care (Whitman & Accardo, 1990).

Although society's fears that women with disabilities will produce defective children are for the most part groundless, because the vast majority of disabilities are not hereditary, these fears have resulted in severe discrimination against women with disabilities in general and women with mental retardation in particular. Around the turn of the century what was referred to as "feeble-mindedness" was considered a major threat to society. As reflected in the following quotation from 1908, it was generally believed that feeble-mindedness was hereditary: "No feeble-minded mother will ever have a child absolutely normal in every respect" (Johnson, as quoted in Wolfensberger, 1975: 38). More important, these women were thought to lack moral restraints concerning sexual activities and it was believed that as a consequence they would produce a large number of illegitimate and deficient children (Simmons, 1982). The preventative measures taken against this threat included large scale forced sterilization (Scheerenberger, 1987) and institutions for "feeble minded women of child-bearing age" were established, where women with mental retardation were segregated from society as well as from men with mental retardation. In 1960, 26 states still had sterilization laws and as late as 1980, 33 states still had laws that prohibited people with mental retardation from marrying (Scheerenberger, 1987). No group of women with disabilities has been as severely discriminated against in terms of their reproductive rights as women with mental retardation and some of the myths surrounding women with mental retardation, such as the myth of their uncontrollable sexuality, are unfortunately still very much alive today (Sank & Lafleche, 1981).

Sexuality and Sexual Abuse

It is widely documented that women with disabilities are typically seen as asexual (Asch & Fine, 1988; Finger, 1985; Matthews, 1983; Shaul, Dowling, & Laden, 1985; Waxman, 1989). This is true of society in general as well as of most professionals with whom women with disabilities come into contact. Because women with disabilities are seen as asexual they are not seen as in need of information about birth control or what is possible in terms of having a sex life and children. Some women with disabilities have criticized the disability rights movement for not addressing sexuality as a political issue similar to housing and transportation. For example, Waxman (1989: 2) claims that many people with disabilities consider sexuality to be the area of greatest oppression: "We are more concerned with being loved and finding sexual fulfillment than getting on a bus." Some authors have speculated about the pervasive stereotype of women with disabilities as asexual, for example Finger (1985), who suggests that at least part of this stereotyping stems from seeing people with disabilities as eternal children. Others (Shaul, Dowling, & Laden, 1985) have suggested that people without disabilities tend to view sex as an acrobatic activity which makes it difficult for them to imagine how people with physical impairments can be sexually active.

Sexual abuse of women and children with disabilities is an area that has received growing attention in recent years (Watson, 1984). Much of the literature in this area is based on studies which show that women with disabilities are at a much greater risk of being sexually abused than other women (Craine et al., 1988; Musick, 1984; Senn, 1988). This is true in society in general, and within residential facilities in particular. One author reports that sexual assault and battering may be two or three times higher for women with disabilities than for other women (O'Toole, 1990). Others report that women in institutions are at a much greater risk of being sexually abused than other women with disabilities (Musick, 1984; Stefan, 1987).

It may seem like a contradiction that women with disabilities are not seen as sexual beings and at the same time they are at a much greater risk of being sexually abused. Those who have studied sexual abuse, for example Cole (1984), have documented that sexual abuse has more to do with oppressive use of power than it has to do with sex. Based on their work with sex offenders, Longo and Gochenour (1981) report that sexual abuse is more related to issues of control and power than to sex. They claim that abusers look for and use vulnerability to create the opportunity to rape. This vulnerability is increased in people who are marginalized, dependent, and in need of affection. Thus, the more vulnerable and powerless people are, the more they are at risk of being sexually abused. Existing studies have documented that women with disabilities are at a greater risk than any other group of women of being sexually abused. Yet, professionals within the human service system continue to ignore this widespread abuse. These chilling realities have led Asch and Fine (1988: 23) to wonder '...how many of these same women have been sterilized to keep the effects of rape from the public eye.'

Reproductive Rights and Disability Rights

The area of reproductive rights has been problematic for many women with disabilities and has been a source of tension between feminists with disabilities and the women's movement. Feminists with disabilities have criticized the reproductive rights movement for ignoring the forced sterilization of women with disabilities; for failing to address the denial of reproductive rights to women with disabilities; and for exploiting fears of disability when it argues for abortion (Fine & Asch, 1982; Finger, 1985). Many of those who struggle with the moral dilemma between disability rights and reproductive rights are feminists with disabilities who are pro-choice, but argue against selective abortion of 'defective' fetuses (Asch, 1986; Saxton, 1987). They argue that the disability rights movement and the reproductive rights movement share a tradition of commitment to women's control over their lives and bodies. They see the battles of these two movements as intertwined; one movement should not try to further its cause at the cost of the other and women's equality with men should not be obtained by subverting the equality and potentiality of people with disabilities. The current trend of prenatal screening and abortion of fetuses identified as disabled has also been criticized, and feminists with disabilities challenge the assumptions about disabilities that underlie these practices (Asch, 1986; Saxton, 1987). They have demonstrated how oppressive attitudes against disability dominate the counseling given to pregnant women and have challenged the assumption that the world would be a better place without people born with disabilities (Saxton, 1987). While the vast majority of writings on the moral dilemma between disability rights and reproductive rights have argued that these are compatible rights, at least one author has taken a different standpoint. Davis (1987) argues that disability rights and reproductive rights are incompatible and that abortion is far from being a right. Instead, abortion underlines women's oppression and is counter-productive to women in general and to women with disabilities in particular.

EDUCATION

Access to education still remains a major problem for people with disabilities, not least for women with disabilities. This section will examine some of the educational barriers experienced by women and girls with disabilities.

The Statistics

When it comes to education, women with disabilities are likely to report less education than both non-disabled women and men with disabilities. Women with disabilities are five times as likely as women without disabilities to have less than eight years of formal education; 17.4% of all women with disabilities have less than 8 years of formal education as compared to 3.5% of non-disabled women. Only 16% of all women with disabilities are likely to have any college education compared to 31% of non-disabled women and 28% of men with disabilities (Bowe, 1984).

Special Education Placement and Gender

Children with disabilities have traditionally been educated in segregated special schools or segregated classes within regular schools and their education has been vastly inferior to the mainstream regular education. Past decades have seen progress toward integrated education for students with disabilities, mostly due to a federal initiative in the form of the Education of All Handicapped Children Act, also known as PL 94-142. This law was enacted in 1975 to guarantee children with disabilities free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. Despite the progress most students with disabilities are still educated in segregation from their non-handicapped peers.

Most studies indicate that boys are more likely to be identified as needing special education than girls. While boys count for 51% of all students in elementary and secondary schools, they can count for up to 75% of students in special education classes (Russo & Jansen, 1988). Researchers have speculated why boys are more readily identified as needing special education. Some authors have suggested that this reflects discrimination against boys with disabilities and deprives them from the benefits of regular education. They suggest that boys are more readily labelled as having a disability and channeled into special education on the grounds of disruptive behaviors. Others have suggested that the overrepresentation of boys in special education reflects the view that educating boys with disabilities is regarded as a priority; they are seen as in need of special education services in order to develop the skills to be able to support themselves and a family later on (Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund, 1983; Russo & Jansen, 1988).

Research also indicates that boys labelled as having mental retardation have higher IQs than girls with the same label. Gillespie-Silver and Heshusius (1981) have suggested that the reason for this may be that the stereotypes of a female and a person with mental retardation are very similar, both are seen as illogical, dependent, emotional, and needing protection. Girls may therefore not be labelled as having mental retardation unless they have significantly low intelligence.

Although the overrepresentation of boys in special education is one of the best documented gender-influence on special education placement, at least one study has reported girls as overrepresented in certain types of special educational programs. In their study of 8,000 people with disabilities, the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (1983) found among other things that girls with physical disabilities were more likely to be placed in segregated special schools than boys with physical disabilities. The authors suggest that these differences stem from the assumption that males must support themselves and a family and therefore need a better education.

The influence of gender on labeling and special education placement is further complicated by the influence of race and class. It has been documented that children, especially boys, of minority races are grossly overrepresented in special education programs, especially programs for students with mild mental retardation (Jones, 1976; Mercer, 1973; Tomlinson, 1982).

A Complicated Picture

Research clearly indicates that boys and girls with the same disability often receive different kinds of education (Women and Disability Awareness Project, 1989). This suggests that gender may play a significant role in how students are identified for educational services. At the same time, studies that have examined the relationship between gender and special educational placement seem to report conflicting findings. We do know that gender can influence special educational placement but we do not know how. Some of the research seems to indicate that the influence of gender may vary between disability groups. In addition, the interaction between gender, disability, and race complicates the picture. It seems safe to conclude that there is a need for more research in this area in order to understand the relationship between special education placement, disability, gender, class, and race.

Special Education and Sex-Role Stereotyping

While all students, males and females, with and without disabilities are subject to sex-biased assumptions in most schools and curriculum, research seems to indicate that sex-role stereotyping may be even more pervasive when students have disabilities. For example, Gillespie and Fink (1974) found that sex-role stereotyping seemed to be especially pervasive for children who have mental retardation or behavioral problems. They report that these students tended to be taught traditional sex-role modes of behavior because that would supposedly enable them to better adjust to society. The authors also found that schoolbooks for children with disabilities tended to include stories and illustrations that were deliberately sex-role stereotypical in order to foster this adjustment.

Higher Education

Higher education continues to be a challenge for women with disabilities. Like men with disabilities, they face accessibility problems; unwillingness on behalf of educational institutions to provide accommodations for disabilities; and lack of special services such as readers for blind students. In addition to the problems women with disabilities share with their male counterparts, they face additional barriers. Like non-disabled women, women with disabilities are channeled into traditional female fields by school counselors and they are likely to encounter even greater obstacles than non-disabled women if they attempt to pursue a career in male-dominated professions (Russo & Jansen, 1988). In addition to being channeled into traditional female fields by educational and career counselors, women with disabilities often receive pressure from such counselors to pursue a career in disability related fields such as rehabilitation counseling or special education (Davis & Marshall, 1987). Russo and Jansen (1988) suggest that the combined effects of gender and disability stereotyping tracks women with disabilities into the most traditional female roles. As a result, women with disabilities are unlikely to have the educational opportunities that will allow them access to highly valued, well-paying professional positions.

EMPLOYMENT

This section examines the specific employment barriers women with disabilities experience and compares their situation to non-disabled women and men with disabilities.

Comparing Men and Women with Disabilities

While men with disabilities have serious employment problems, women with disabilities are significantly worse off and this seems to be true for all types and levels of disabilities. Men with disabilities are almost twice as likely to have jobs than women with disabilities. Almost 42% of men with disabilities are in the labor force (meaning that they either work or are actively seeking work), compared to 24% of women. In addition, while more than 30% of men with disabilities work full-time jobs, only 12% of women with disabilities have full time employment (Bowe, 1984). Women with disabilities are also significantly poorer than men with disabilities, partly due to the fact that they are more likely to be unemployed and partly due to the fact that when they work they receive considerably lower wages than men with disabilities. Women with disabilities who work full-time earn only 56% of what full-time employed men with disabilities do (Bowe, 1984).

Gender-Biases in Rehabilitation Services

A handful of studies have been conducted to examine and explain the unequal employment status of women with disabilities as compared to men with disabilities. In a study of gender equity in access to rehabilitation services, Menz et al., (1989) found that nationally, women represent less than one-third of the population in rehabilitation programs. They also found that women were more likely to be 'successfully rehabilitated' into part-time jobs or to a homemaker status, while men were more likely to enter full-time jobs in the labor force. The authors suggest that the reasons for these differences are gender-biased assumptions about women, men, and work: "Women with disabilities face 'double jeopardy' based on both their disability and their gender... The stereotypes ascribed to people with disabilities and women, in general, condones passivity, dependence, helplessness and failure" (Menz et al., 1989: 32). These attitudes seem to be shared by the general public and rehabilitation counselors, the result being that women with disabilities are less likely to be referred to vocational training; have a harder time gaining access to rehabilitation programs; are less likely to get quality training; and are more likely to be "successfully rehabilitated" into non-employment.

Women with Disabilities and Disability Policy

The impact of disability policy on women with disabilities has been the focus of a small number of studies. For example, Kutza (1985) examined the impact of current U.S. disability policy on women with disabilities. She demonstrates how the major programs designed to assist people with disabilities, such as supplemental security income, disability insurance, workers' compensation, and vocational rehabilitation, disadvantage women because of their relationship to labor market participation. The study found that not only did women receive fewer benefits than men, they also received lower benefits. Thus, these programs do not protect women with disabilities from the economic threats associated with disability to the same extent they protect men.

A similar study of the influence of income support on the lives of women with disabilities was conducted by Mudrick (1988). She found that compared to men with disabilities, women with disabilities received less from public income support programs, despite their often greater need. Mudrick demonstrates how crucial income support is to the livelihood of women with disabilities. At the same time, income support is usually both less accessible and smaller for women with disabilities than for men with disabilities. Mudrick suggests the reason for this is partly due to the misfit between women's work patterns and the design of the programs, and partly rooted in the stereotypical attitudes toward women's economic roles and women's family roles, as well as attitudes toward people with disabilities.

Women with Developmental Disabilities

The studies reviewed above have mostly been conducted with women who have physical impairments. Women with mental retardation and other developmental disabilities have traditionally been neglected by those who have examined the employment situation of women with disabilities. The developmental disability field has recently devoted increasing attention to the importance of employment and a new federal initiative, supported employment, has been developed to assist even those with the most severe disabilities to get and hold a job. The newly found emphasis on employment in the field of developmental disabilities recognizes the importance of productive work as a means to achieve social equality and financial independence, and supported employment programs are now being developed across the country. Despite a wealth of recent writings on employment for people with developmental disabilities, the specific barriers women with developmental disabilities face have basically been ignored. It appears as though those who write about employment for people with mental retardation assume that gender, as well as class, race and other social dimensions, are irrelevant. Having mental retardation is seen as such an overpowering characteristic that it makes all other social dimensions irrelevant. A search through the literature on employment for people with developmental disabilities only brought two resources that mention sex differences. In their study of employment outcomes for young adults with mental retardation Kregel and Wehman (1989) make a passing remark about sex-differences. The study focused on a group of 186 adolescents with mental retardation, between the age of 18 and 22, who had been placed in competitive jobs through supported employment programs. Among other things, they found a '...disproportionate representation of males (68 percent male to 32 percent female) in the population of placed consumers' (Kregel & Wehman, 1989: 265). In an earlier study Hill, et al (1985) found a similar trend among a group of 155 people with mental retardation between the age of 16 and 66. This was a long term study of people who had been placed in various competitive jobs by one supported employment program and focused on, 'client and family demographic characteristics in relation to a successful vocational outcome defined as retention in employment six months after the date of first placement" (Hill et al., 1985: 69, emphasis in original). Among the findings of the study were that the majority of people being placed through the program were males, or 66%, while females represented only 34% of those who received jobs through the program. The study also showed that males were more likely to reach the successful retention rate of 6 months, or 70%, compared to 55% of the females. A significant number of the 155 people in this study had a secondary handicap, in addition to the label of mental retardation. Thus, 24% are reported to have had behavior disorders; 10% had cerebral palsy; 12% had mobility impairments; 5% had impaired hearing; 10% had visual impairment; nearly 10% had limited use of arms or hands; and 5% had schizophrenia. One of the interesting findings of this study is that, except for the people who were identified as having schizophrenia, the secondary handicap did not seem to influence the retention rate. That is, people with secondary handicaps, in addition to the label of mental retardation, had either the same retention rate, or slightly higher retention rate than the general mental retardation population. These findings seem to indicate that, when it comes to employment of people with mental retardation, being a woman may be a greater handicap than having physical, sensory, or behavioral handicaps. Only schizophrenia seems to be as severe a handicap in terms of getting and keeping a job as being female. This study is perhaps the only study which has examined gender inequality in employment services for people with developmental disabilities. The findings of the study seem to indicate that women with mental retardation face the same physical discrimination as other women with disabilities.

Comparing Women With and Without Disabilities

A comparison between women with disabilities and non-disabled women also reveals the disadvantage of women with disabilities. The past few decades have seen a revolutionary increase of women's participation in the paid labor force. Especially noticeable has been the increased number of working mothers (Berg, 1986; Fox & Hesse-Biber, 1984). In 1970, 45% of non-disabled women were in the labor force, while by 1982, 64% of women participated in the labor force and more than 51% of mothers with preschool children were working (Berg 1986; Bowe, 1984). Women with disabilities have not been a part of the women's employment revolution. In 1982 only 20% of women with disabilities had jobs (Asch & Fine, 1988; Bowe, 1984; Russo & Jansen, 1988). Employment policies have devoted little attention to the disadvantaged employment status of women with disabilities. This seems to hold true of both the generic state and federal employment policies as well as the employment policies directed specifically towards people with disabilities.

The evidence available to date leads to the conclusion that the economy in general, and the specialized services in particular, restrict the employment opportunities and lives of women with disabilities.

Women, Work, and Mental Health

The increase in women's labor force participation, and especially the dramatic increase of working mothers, has led to some speculation about the possible negative effect on women's mental health because of the added stress employment may bring to women who already have the primary responsibility for childrearing and other demands within the family. In a study of the relationship between women's work and women's mental health, Sales and Frieze (1984) found that the influence of women's increased employment participation is primarily positive and very few negative effects have been found. Their study indicates that work is a source of self-esteem and satisfaction for most women and, as a central contributor to adult adjustment, participation in the labor force may be health enhancing for women. They also report that the group of women who is most at risk of having mental health problems are non-white, non-married, non-employed women, and women who live in social isolation with limited social roles. This suggests that women with disabilities may be at greater risk than most other women of having mental health problems as a result of their social isolation and the limited social roles available to them, including their limited access to labor force participation.

CONCLUSION

Women with disabilities have historically been neglected by those concerned with issues of disability as well as the feminist movement. It is only within the last decade that serious attempts have been made to identify and understand the forces shaping their lives. These attempts have mainly focused on understanding how being female and having a disability interacts and how women with disabilities view their experiences. This decade of writing has provided us with rich personal accounts as well as research-based information about the social situation of women with disabilities and a long awaited theoretical framework to understand and interpret their lives and experiences. This new and emerging scholarship is somewhat limited and much remains to be learned about women with disabilities. At the same time this scholarship provides the basis and the promise for future advances. Women with disabilities are one of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in today's society. We need to develop a better understanding of their lives in order to remove the obstacles that still remain in their way to equality.

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PART II

WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES:
An Annotated Bibliography

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WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES:
An Annotated Bibliography

To make it easier for the reader to find materials on topics of specific interest this bibliography has been divided into eight sections. In some cases it was difficult to decide which category was most appropriate for a given article or book. In those instances the material was included in the section that best reflected the content.

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Each section starts with a brief introduction and then provides an annotated list of resources, arranged in alphabetic order, by author. Whenever possible, the section concludes with information about where to find further resources.

INTRODUCTION

Anyone looking for materials about the lives and experiences of women with disabilities a few years back would have found little to read. Today there is a growing body of literature addressing different aspects of the lives of women and girls with disabilities. These writings have appeared in various books and periodicals within a range of disciplines. This literature has not fallen into one field of study and has often been interdisciplinary in nature. As a result these materials are scattered across many disciplines which makes it hard to gain an overview of what already exists and even harder to know where to look for materials. Because of how hard it is to find writings about women with disabilities one frequently hears statements like, 'There is nothing written about women with disabilities.' Although much remains to be learned about women and girls with disabilities, this bibliography shows that there already exists a substantial body of literature on the topic.

Attempts have been made to reflect the diversity presented in the literature on women with disabilities by including materials from diverse fields of study and the broad range of issues addressed in this literature. It has also been attempted to include the diversity among women and girls with disabilities presented by the type and severity of their disabilities, as well as other factors which create diversity in women's lives, such as race, class, and culture.

The goal of this annotated bibliography is to collect in one place an overview of the written materials that already exist in order to make these resources more accessible for people. Although this is not a comprehensive overview of everything that has been written about women with disabilities this should be a good starting point for people who are looking for materials in this area.

The article in Part I of this information package includes an overview of the literature and a discussion of some of the issues it raises.

GENERAL ISSUES

The writings listed in this section address the lives of women with disabilities in general. Among these are edited volumes covering a range of issues, as well as articles and books describing the lives of women with disabilities and providing theoretical frameworks to understand their situation. Although much of the written materials on women with disabilities have focused on women who have physical disabilities, attempts were made to identify and include the full range of disabilities in this section. The last part of this section lists journals that have devoted an entire issue to women with disabilities. In most cases, these journals are excellent sources of information and resources about women with disabilities.

TITLE: The multiple minority status of disabled women

AUTHOR: Barnartt, S. N.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1987

In S. C. Hey, G. Kiger, & J. Seidel (Eds.), Impaired and disabled people in society: Structure, processes and the individual (pp. 290-304). Salem, OR: The Society for Disability Studies and Willamette University.

This article examines the situation of women with disabilities as a group with multiple minority status. The author draws upon the work of others who have attempted to draw parallels between the situation of women of color and women with disabilities, arguing that both of these groups can be considered doubly disadvantaged when compared to white, non-disabled women as well as to men of their own group. The author criticizes previous work in this area and clams she will attempt to remedy some of their deficiencies with her own study, which consists of a statistical comparison of three groups: two groups of disabled people and one group of non-disabled people. The author claims that the data presented in the article support the multiple minority status arguments but argues that women with disabilities are not a minority group, because they lack 'groupness.' Despite the author's fairly arrogant claims at the beginning of the article, her study does not add much to the previous analysis of the multiple minority status of women with disabilities.

TITLE: Disabled women in America: A statistical report drawn from census data

AUTHOR: Bowe, F.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1984

President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped
Washington, DC 20210

This 26-page report is based on data collected from the 1981 Current Population Survey of the Bureau of the Census and summarizes findings concerning women with disabilities. Although the primary focus is on the employment status of women with disabilities of working age (16-64 years old) who do not live in institutions, it also provides statistical accounts of various other aspects in the lives of this group of women such as education, marital status, and so on. The report compares women with disabilities to two groups of people in the same age range; men with disabilities and women without disabilities.

Some of the report's findings are that only 19.9% of women with disabilities have work. Men with disabilities are almost twice as likely to have work: 36% of them are employed. At the same time 59.1% of non-disabled women in the same age range are working. Women with disabilities who work full time only earn 56% of what men with disabilities who have full time jobs earn. The average woman with a disability is 51 years old, has a high school level of education, is unemployed, and her income from all sources was less than $3,500 in 1980. This statistical summary is not very thorough but shows clearly the grim economic realities of women with disabilities.

TITLE: Women and disability

AUTHOR: Boylan, E.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1991

London: Zed Books Ltd.

Originally published as a kit for the International Year of Disabled Persons for The United Nations, the main purpose of this edited book is to provide information about the problems that women with disabilities face for not only survival, but for finding a place within their families and communities. The book covers such topics as prevention, education, rehabilitation, caregivers, aging women and disability, and some ways that women are 'breaking out of the cocoon of disability.'

TITLE: Women and disabilities: A national forum

AUTHOR: Boyle, G., Rioux, M., Ticoll, M., & Felske, A. W.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1988

Entourage, 3(4), 9-13

This article grew out of a three-day conference about women and disability, held in June 1988 in Ottawa, Canada, and describes the major issues covered during the conference. The conference discussed issues of oppression of women with mental retardation in areas such as education, employment, reproductive rights, violence against women, motherhood, participation in the women's movement, and inclusion in research and policy development. The authors criticize the exclusion of women with mental retardation from the women's movement and state that the struggle for rights in these areas is a struggle which should be shared by all women.

TITLE: Women and disability: The double handicap

AUTHORS: Deegan, M. J., & Brooks, N. A. (Eds.)

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1985

Transaction Books
Rutgers University
New Brunswick, NJ 08903

This book is the first major collection of scholarly writing about women who have disabilities and contains 11 chapters dealing with various aspects of their lives. The major factors that unify this collection are a central focus on the double minority status of women with disabilities, the lack of information available about their lives and experiences, and the need to change the conditions that perpetuate the structural inequality women with disabilities experience.

Two of the chapters, Chapter 2, by Fine and Asch, 'Disabled Women: Sexism without the Pedestal,' and Chapter 4, by Deegan, 'Multiple Minority Groups: A Case Study of Physically Disabled Women,' provide a conceptualization of women with disabilities that have had a significant impact on other people's thinking and writing about women with disabilities. In her chapter, Deegan points out the multiple discrimination against women with disabilities; as a woman and as a person with a disability. Deegan's discussion of the effects of the multiple minority status of women with disabilities is useful in examining structural discrimination in employment, education and other areas. Fine and Asch's conceptualization of disabled women as 'roleless' has already gained much note in subsequent literature. The remaining sections focus on specific types of disabilities and their consequences for women or specific problem areas, such as mothering and self-help. Other issues covered are the economic effects of a multiple minority status and the negative consequences of present policies on the lives of women with disabilities.

The book is a beginning step in unraveling the interaction between more than one minority status being held concomitantly by an individual and a group. While the quality of the articles is not uniform, they all provide insights into the problems and experiences of these women and add immeasurably to the conceptual and theoretical understanding of the lives of women with physical disabilities. One shortcoming of the book is that it only deals with women who have physical disabilities. Another is that rather than examining class and race issues, it is dominated by white middle class views and values.

TITLE: Imprinting our image: An international anthology by women with disabilities.

AUTHORS: Driedger, D., & Gray, S.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1992

Gynergy Books
P.O. Box 2023
Charlottetown, PEI C1A 7N7
CANADA

The editors compiled articles from 17 countries by women with disabilities. They stress the importance of understanding disability not as an inherent tragedy but as a social problem created by a lack of sensitivity and awareness to the experiences of women with disabilities and to the physical, social, and psychological barriers that occur as a result of this insensitivity. The book is organized around its central principle that women with disabilities are citizens with the means to contribute to their societies. The book is divided into five sections. They include: Our Image in the Family, Our Image in the Community, Imprinting Our Image on the World, In Spite of the World, and Dealing with the World.

TITLE: Women with disabilities: Essays in psychology, culture and politics

AUTHORS: Fine, M., & Asch, A. (Eds.)

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1988

Temple University Press
Broad and Oxford Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19122

So far, this is the most comprehensive edited collection of scholarly writing about women with disabilities. Fine and Asch, the editors of this volume, have, for a number of years, been involved in examining what it means to be a women with a disability in today's society. Their early conceptualization of the problems facing women with disabilities has influenced and informed other people's thinking. Now these two women have collected the work of 22 writers and thinkers to explore the psychological, cultural and political dilemmas currently faced by approximately 18 or 19 million women with disabilities in America. The volume covers a wide range of issues, reviews the most recent thinking on this subject and raises provocative new areas for future exploration.

The 13 essays in the volume are loosely organized in three categories; 'Bodies and Images,' 'Disabled Women in Relationships,' and 'Policy and Politics.' In addition there is a lengthy introduction by Asch and Fine where they review past work (and neglect) on this subject and point toward future exploration. The editors also close the book with an 'Epilogue: Research and Politics to Come.' Like in all collections of essays, the quality is uneven. At the same time this is an important document about the lives of girls and women with disabilities in American society today. It is also notable that the editors have made attempts to cover broader issues than previous collections on women with disabilities. First, this volume covers a broader range of disabilities than many previous writings. An example of this the inclusion of women with developmental disabilities, a group that has traditionally been neglected in volumes on women with disabilities. Second, the volume deals with issues that often have been neglected such as disability and ethnicity; the moral dilemma between a reproductive rights and disability rights; and an analysis of the exclusion of women with disabilities from the women's movement. The volume also includes a discussion about girls with disabilities. This is a book that everyone interested in the lives and experiences of women with disabilities should read.

TITLE: Women and disability don't mix: Double discrimination and disabled women's rights

AUTHOR: Habib, L. A.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1995

Gender and Development, 3(2), 49-53.

In this brief article with an international perspective, the author asserts the importance of understanding and addressing gender issues and how they impact on the experiences of women. She argues that this is important in order to develop strategies for establishing and enforcing the basic human rights of people with disabilities in order to fight double discrimination in such areas as family life, marriage, education, health care, and care for a disabled child.

TITLE: Women with disabilities: Two handicaps plus

AUTHOR: Hanna, W. J., & Rogovsky, E.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1991

Disability, Handicap & Society, 6(1), 49-63.

Through surveys, the authors sought to understand the experiences of women with disabilities. Comparing these women to disabled men, non disabled men, and non disabled women, they found that women with disabilities participate less in social relations, educational institutions, and the labor force than expected when compared to their non disabled/disabled/male/female counterparts. They cite this isolation as being attributed to the nurturance and the attractiveness norms of the American socio-cultural system. The authors address the issue of self-concept, stating that women with disabilities often have poor self concepts, and they link this poor self concept in a circular causation to participation and socio-cultural influences.

TITLE: On the situation of African American women with physical disabilities

AUTHORS: Hanna, W. J., & Rogovsky, E.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1992

Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling, 23(4), 39-45.

This article examines the experiences of African American women who have physical disabilities. They claim that African American women have a higher instance of physical disability and that their socioeconomic situation is lower than their non-disabled counterparts. The authors use quantitative surveys as well as qualitative interviews to explore factors which seem likely to contribute to the experiences of African American women with disabilities. They conclude that these women experience multiple oppressions, specifically racism, sexism, and ableism. The authors offer as solutions to these inequalities cultural variations in services and taking into account the client's unique needs by offering culturally sensitive supports.

TITLE: Women, disability and society

AUTHOR: Hannaford, S.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1989

Interface, June 1989, 10-12.

In this thoughtful article, Susan Hannaford examines the role of women with disabilities as being doubly disadvantaged; as women and as disabled. She also examines the traditional roles of women as mothers, wives, helpers and carers, and what implications it has for women with disabilities that they are seen as unable to fill these most traditional female roles. Susan Hannaford states that feminist theory, which has become accepted as a frame to understand women's lives and position in society, has not benefited women with disabilities; they have been left out of feminist analysis. As a result women with disabilities are '...relegated to no-woman's land where they are left merely to inhabit the empty space that the progress of women has left behind' (p. 12). She concludes by calling for a better understanding of the situation of women with disabilities.

TITLE: Feminism and disability

AUTHOR: Hillyer, B.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1993

University of Oklahoma Press
1005 Asp Avenue
Norman, OK 73019-0445

Written out of a need in the feminist movement to include women with disabilities and a need in the disability rights movement to address the unique experiences of women, Feminism and Disability combines the personal, political, and intellectual aspects of feminist theory and disability theory. Hillyer discusses such issues as body awareness, community, nature and technology, and the ways in which cultural standards of language, independence, and even mother-blaming are constructed. She also challenges political movements which stress productivity and normalization in order to include more types of people and more aspects of the human condition.

TITLE: Does she boil eggs? Towards a feminist model of disability

AUTHOR: Lloyd, M.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1992

Disability, Handicap & Society, 7(3), 207-221.

The author examines disability from the perspective of disabled women. She focuses on the social model of disability rather than a medical model and asserts that disability is another form of oppression experienced by women. She argues that disabled women have been excluded from both the women's movement, which is oriented toward non-disabled women, and from the disability rights movement, which is oriented toward disabled men. Using the history of black feminism, the author argues for a reframing of the analysis in which to explore the simultaneous experiences of gender and disability.

TITLE: Women and disability

AUTHOR: Lonsdale, S.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1990

St. Martin's Press.
175 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10010

Lonsdale explores how women with physical disabilities experience the double discrimination of being both a woman and a disabled person in society. Placing physical disability in a social and political context rather than an individual one, she uncovers how women with disabilities have been rendered invisible, how they see their self image and body image, how physical disability often leads to dependence, and how women experience a loss of civil liberties and how they face discrimination. Lonsdale also considers the ways in which these situations can change for women, specifically, how policy practices can change so that women can achieve greater independence. Chapters include subjects such as the social context of disability, invisible women, self image and sexuality, employment, financial consequences of disability, discrimination, and independence.

TITLE: Voices from the shadow: Women with disabilities speak out

AUTHOR: Matthews, G. F.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1983

The Women's Educational Press
16 Baldwin Street
Toronto, ON CANADA

This book explores the lives of women with disabilities in Canada and is based on interviews with 45 women with disabilities. The author herself has a physical disability and the book is a mixture of her own autobiography and the interviews. The result is a very readable and interesting account of the lives of women with disabilities, some of whom live in institutions and others who live in the community.

The book is candid in its critique of the medical and rehabilitation professionals, institutions and the attitudinal and physical barriers in society. It explores the feelings of women with disabilities about themselves and their relationships with others. It points out that many doctors and social workers as well as society in general think that women with disabilities are asexual and therefore not in need of information on birth control or what is possible in terms of having children or a sex life. Other issues addressed are employment, education, housing, parenting, accessibility and social and governmental assistance.

The introduction to the book is written by Pat Israel and Cathy McPherson, 'two feminists with disabilities' (as they call themselves). They discuss, amongst other things, the relations between the disability rights movement and the women's movement and criticize how un-accessible the women's movement has been for women with disabilities.

TITLE: The neurotic woman: The role of gender in psychiatric illness

AUTHOR: Miles, A.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1988

New York University Press
70 Washington Square, South
New York, NY 10012

This is a British study on the influence of gender on mental illness. It is based on interviews with 65 women and 20 men who were referred to outpatient psychiatric treatment for a variety of neurotic-level disorders. The book provides an overview of the major theoretical approaches to mental illness and feminist application of these approaches. The author uses these theoretical approaches to interpret the interview material and focuses on issues such as social support, stigma, work within the home and outside the home, and how people responded to the treatment they are given. The study focuses on how these people experience and interpret their lives, their mental problems, and the treatment. Many of the chapters explore the differences or similarities between the experiences of men and women. The author describes many of the women as distressed and overburdened caretakers of family members who are ill or have disabilities, and sometimes links improvement in their psychological status to changes in their caretaking role.

TITLE: Feminism and disability

AUTHOR: Morris, J.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1993

Feminist Review, 43, 57-70.

The author discusses the absence of women with disabilities from feminist scholarship and feminist theory. Morris claims that a significant failure of feminism is that it fails to incorporate disabled women into its politics, theory, research, and methodology. She argues that feminist theory would benefit from the inclusion of the concerns and experiences of disabled women, and that feminist theory and feminist methodology have major contributions to make to the disability research. The author discusses her anger and frustration with feminism in two ways: first, that disability is generally invisible from feminism's mainstream agenda, and second, that when disability is a subject of research by feminists, the researchers objectify disabled people so that the research is alienated from their experiences rather than attempting to understand the experiences of disabled women.

TITLE: Personal and political: A feminist perspective on researching physical disability

AUTHOR: Morris, J.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1992

Disability, Handicap & Society, 7(2), 157-166.

Morris asserts that feminist theory and methodology have largely ignored and alienated women with disabilities and the research conducted by disabled people. She argues the feminist theory needs to take up the challenge of applying their principles to the study of disability and to examine the lives of disabled women. In turn, Morris feels that disabled women and disability research in general has much to learn from feminist methodology; mainly the principle of making the personal political. In addition, Morris outlines the role she sees for nondisabled researchers interested in researching disability related issues. She views the role of the nondisabled researcher as an ally, and calls on nondisabled as well as disabled researchers to continue to study the ways in which the nondisabled society oppresses its members with disabilities. Lastly, she argues that disability research is of great importance in the general understanding of the perpetuation of inequalities in society.

TITLE: Pride against prejudice

AUTHOR: Morris, J.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1991

New Society Publishers
4527 Springfield Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19143

Morris, a disabled feminist and activist, provides a feminist analysis to the study of the experiences of women with disabilities. Basing her arguments on the feminist principle that the personal is political, Morris eloquently challenges such issues as prejudice, abortion, and the notion that people with disabilities lead lives that are not worth living. She further discusses the history of people with disabilities in institutions and under the Nazi regime. Morris also examines the meaning of disability in Western culture and the meanings of history of segregation, dependence, and an emerging independence of people with disabilities. Pride Against Prejudice is a commentary on political activism and rights, and stresses the need to fight back against the prejudice, stereotypes, and oppression of an abelist culture.

TITLE: Women and mental health: New directions for change

AUTHOR: Mowbray, C. T., Lanir, S., & Hulce, M. (Eds.)

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1985

Harrington Park Press
28 East 22nd Street
New York, NY 10010-6194

This book is written by the Women's Task Force of the Department of Mental Health in the State of Michigan. The book examines sex differences in mental health problems and sexist treatment by mental health agencies. The focus of the book is twofold. First, 'To present the most relevant, up-to-date data and factual evidence on women's mental health problems, causes, and treatment' (p. 2). Second, 'To present recommended changes and alternatives for improving prevention and treatment of women's mental health problems' (p. 3).

The book outlines a feminist perspective which takes into account the specific and different needs of women and men and challenges the traditional view that typically defines the woman as 'the patient' and 'the problem.' Instead, it is argued that what is commonly labelled 'pathology' in women patients by state agencies is often women's desperate response to highly stressful situations like loss of financial support, physical abuse, and martial problems.

The materials in this book were originally published as a special double issue of the feminist quarterly, Women & Therapy (Volume 3, Numbers 3/4, Fall/Winter 1984). The book contains a wealth of information about women and mental health and should be of interest to anyone looking for materials about sexism in mental health practices.

TITLE: A feminist sociology of knowledge

AUTHOR: Smith, D. E.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: in press

Northeastern University Press
Box 6525
Ithaca, NY 14851

In this book Dorothy Smith, one of the leading feminist theorists today, argues that conventional sociology perpetuates traditional patriarchal relations of power through ideological practices. She is especially concerned with the application of sociological ideology to the human service bureaucracy and the way institutions of mental health reconstruct women's lives.

TITLE: The myth of bodily perfection

AUTHOR: Stone, S. D.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1995

Disability & Society, 10(4), 413-424.

Grounding her arguments in social constructionism, the author examines the myth of bodily perfection in relation to those with disabilities. She argues that this myth plays an integral role in creating a category of people labeled disabled and of relegating them to the status of 'other.' Stone draws on the experiences of women to discuss the idea of appearance norms and claims that feminist critiques of these norms have virtually ignored the pressures on women who do not have full use of their bodies. Therefore, many women often try to hide their disability or pass for normal. She concludes by arguing that the myth of bodily perfection and appearance norms which deny the experiences of disabled women contribute to the denial of disability and therefore are oppressive. Stone calls for acknowledging disability as a means of honoring humanness.

TITLE: Women and mental health policy

AUTHOR: Walker, L. E. (Ed.)

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1984

Sage Publications
P.O. Box 5084
Newbury Park, CA 91359

This volume reviews the major issues for women in mental health and links them to policy decisions and directions. The editor points out that although women use mental health services disproportionately, mental health research focusing on issues related to women is often hard to get funded and disseminated. The reason for this lack of support for women's studies within mental health is, according to the editor, that this research often challenges current male-dominated practices. This volume is no exception and many of the chapters deal with topics which are not popular with the larger male-dominated culture nor the mental health subculture.

The first chapter describes the emergence of a feminist perspective in mental health research and public policy. The following chapters cover a wide variety of topics such as the influence of female psychologists on policy making; women and psychotherapy research; the inaccessibility of the mental health system for low-income minority women; lesbian women and mental health policy; violence against women; the problem of sexual intimacy between female-clients and male-therapists; feminist therapy; and many more. This volume contains a wealth of information about women and mental health and is a good starting point for anyone interested in this topic.

TITLE: Madwives: Schizophrenic women in the 1950s

AUTHOR: Warren, C. A. B.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1987

Rutgers University Press
109 Church Street
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

This is a study of the relationship between mental illness and the gender roles of married women in the fifties, and how gender roles influenced the responses to, and experience of mental illness. The data Carol Warren uses was collected in the 1950s in a study of married women who were admitted to a mental hospital. The focus of the original study was on how women's crises were modified during hospitalization, but Warren uses the same data to examine how the gender roles of the fifties shaped the experiences of these same women. Warren's analysis shows how the problems these women experienced were shaped by their gender roles and that gender roles were an important factor in the hospitalization of these housewives. A very interesting study.

TITLE: The rejected body: Feminist philosophical reflections on disability

AUTHOR: Wendell, S.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1996

Routledge, Chapman and Hall, Inc.
29 West 35th Street
New York, NY 10001

In The rejected body, Susan Wendell, a woman with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, draws parallels between her own experiences with illness to feminist theory and disability studies. She argues (as many others have), that feminist theory has neglected to incorporate the perspectives and experiences of women with disabilities, and that these perspectives must be included in future discussions of feminist ethics, the body, and the social critique of the medical model. Wendell also examines how cultural attitudes about the body contribute to disability oppression and society's unwillingness to accept different types of bodies.

FURTHER RESOURCES:
Theme Issues in Journals and Periodicals

The following section lists journals and periodicals that have devoted a special issue to the theme of women and disability. Some of these journals are published within the field of disability while others are feminist journals. Most of these journals are excellent sources of information and resources about women with disabilities. The journals are listed in chronological order.

Off Our Backs
May 1981, 11(5)

Off Our Backs, Inc.
1724 20th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20009

The May 1981 issue of the women's news journal Off Our Backs was a special issue on women with disabilities. This was, to the best of my knowledge, the first time a journal devoted an issue to this theme. Most of the articles are first-person accounts about having a disability written by lesbian women with disabilities and their friends and lovers. The issue also contains interviews with women who have disabilities and issue oriented articles. One of the articles deals with health issues for women with mental retardation and is reviewed in the health section of this bibliography.

Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare
July 1981, 8(2)

This issue was devoted to the theme 'Women with disabilities: The double handicap.' Among the articles published in this issue was 'Disabled women: Sexism without the pedestal,' written by Michelle Fine and Adrienne Asch. This article is still regarded as one of the best introduction to the issues faced by women with disabilities.

Journal of Visual Impairments and Blindness
June 1983, 77(6)

American Foundation for the Blind
15 West 16th Street
New York, NY 10011

This 100 page special issue is devoted to the theme 'Being blind, being a woman.' It contains a number of articles addressing diverse issues in the lives of visually impaired and blind women such as early socialization, self-esteem, role models, setting life goals, sexuality, and an article that examines the influence of gender in the autobiographies of blind women and men. The issue also contains a special 20-page insert on education and career opportunities for blind and visually impaired women. Additionally there are short reports, resource reviews, and reviews of over 30 autobiographies and biographies of blind and visually impaired women. With just 4 exceptions all of the contributors to this issue are themselves blind or visually impaired women.

Resources for Feminist Research
March 1985, 14(1)

The Ontario Institute
for Studies in Education
252 Bloor Street, West
Toronto, Ontario M65 4T3
CANADA

This is a 110 page collection of articles, essays, poetry, book reviews and lists of resources and references around the theme 'Women and Disability.' Most of the articles are first-person accounts from women who have disabilities and deal with these women's experiences of poverty, discrimination, cultural isolation, self-image, parenting, relationships, powerlessness, and so on. There is no serious attempt in any of these articles to theorize around women with disabilities but the issue contains a wealth of information about where to find resources about women with disabilities. The issue focuses almost solely on women who have physical disabilities.

Disability Studies Quarterly
Spring 1986, 6(2)

Suffolk University
Sawyer School of Management
Department of Public Management
Eight Ashburton Place
Boston, MA 02108-2770

This 38 page issue is devoted to 'Women, Disability, and Gender-Related Issues,' and focuses mostly on women with physical disabilities. Except for a 1 1/2 page article by Adrienne Asch and Michelle Fine 'Women and Disability: Setting the Agenda,' this issue does not contain articles. Instead it lists various resources and references like book reviews; short reports from recent conferences on women and disability; describes briefly current research projects; and reviews films about women with disabilities and other women. This issue is an excellent source of information and should be of interest to anyone looking for resources about women with disabilities.

Sinister Wisdom
Winter 1989-1990, 39

Sinister Wisdom
P.O. Box 3252
Berkeley CA 94703

This is a 140 page collection of poetry, essays, drawings, pictures, and articles which all focus on disability. Most of the pieces are first-person accounts by lesbians who have disabilities. The women in this issue represent a variety of viewpoints and address a wide range of disability issues from a personal and a political point of view. The women who contributed to this volume have a range of disabilities such as dyslexia, severe allergies, physical disabilities, and blindness, as well as representing a range of racial, cultural, and economic diversity.

Resources of interest to lesbians with disabilities are listed in the back of the collections, these include books, periodicals, organizations, both art organizations and disability organizations.

Journal of Practical Approaches to Developmental Handicap

Volume 14, No. 2
Rehabilitation Studies, 4th floor
Education Tower
The University of Calgary
2500 University Drive, N.W.
Calgary, Alberta T2N 1N4
CANADA

This journal is preparing a special issue on 'Women and Disability.' This issue was published in 1990 as Volume 14, No. 2.

LIFE HISTORIES AND PERSONAL ACCOUNTS

A substantial part of the literature about women with disabilities has been written by themselves documenting their experiences of being female and having a disability. In addition to women's own personal accounts this section includes an article which examines the autobiographies of people with disabilities from a gender perspective. The section also lists literature which has been written by others about the lives of women and girls with disabilities, some of these writings are by friends or lovers of these women, others by researchers. Personal accounts and life histories of women with disabilities is perhaps the area where most literature exists. This section is by no means a comprehensive overview of everything that has been written but it should give the reader a good idea about the diversity presented in these writings.

TITLE: Through a woman's I: An annotated bibliography of American women's autobiographical writings, 1946-1976

AUTHOR: Addis, P. K.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1983

Scarecrow Press
52 Liberty Street
P.O. Box 4167
Metuchen, NJ 08840

This annotated bibliography of autobiographical writings by American women contains a number of autobiographies by women with disabilities or chronic illness.

TITLE: Lives without, lives within: Autobiographies of blind women and men

AUTHOR: Asch, A., & Sacks, L. H.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1983

Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness, 77(6), 242-247.

This article examines the autobiographies of 25 people; 15 women and 10 men, who all are blind or visually impaired. The article is written from a gender perspective and explores whether blindness or visual impairment influences the lives of women and men differently. The article describes the ideal roles women and men are expected to play and discusses how the authors of the autobiographies fill these roles. They examine the impact of gender, as well as the impact of blindness in the lives of these people and compare their accounts of their lives to autobiographies of non-disabled women and men.

TITLE: Know me as I am

AUTHOR: Atkinson, D., & Williams, F.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1990

London: Hodder and Stoughton.

This book is an anthology of poetry, art, and prose by people with learning difficulties. The editors have collected 'life stories' from numerous people in such topics as memories, relationships, daily life, a sense of self, struggle and self-determination, oppression, creativity, imagination and fantasy, and transitions. The book concludes with three life stories and an exploration of the key themes of identity, personal struggle, and relationships. The editors also include implications for research and a discussion of their roles as editors.

TITLE: The social meaning of mental retardation: Two life stories

AUTHOR: Bogdan, R., & Taylor, S. J.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1994

Teachers College Presss
1234 Amsterdam Avenue
New York, NY 10027

This book presents the life histories of two people, a woman and a man, who both have been labelled mentally retarded,' and who are both former inmates of institutions for people with mental retardation. This is one of the few books that presents the life and experiences of a woman with mental retardation in her own words. Originally published in 1982, this updated edition includes a postscript discussing changes in the field of mental retardation and in our society since the original printing.

This is an unusual book in the field of mental retardation for at least two reasons. First, it presents the lives and experiences of people labelled mentally retarded as they themselves view and understand them. People labeled mentally retarded have traditionally not been treated as legitimate informants or seen as having important insights to offer about their own situation. Second, instead of talking about the reality of the concept of mental retardation the authors ask: Is mental retardation real? What is mental retardation? What does mental retardation mean in our society? Although the authors do not use a gender perspective in their analysis of the lives of people with disabilities this book gives an important insight into the life of a woman with mental retardation.

TITLE: Winnie: 'My life in the institution'

AUTHOR: Bolnick, J. P.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1985

St. Martin's/Marek
175 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10010

This is the life story of Winnie Sprockett, who was admitted to a state institution for people with mental retardation at the age of six. Winnie's story is written by her friend, journalist Jamie Pastor Bolnick. The story is based on Winnie's autobiography which she wrote to prove to her brother-in-law and the world that she was not retarded and she desperately wanted her autobiography to be published. Jamie decided to help Winnie tell her story and Winnie's short written account of her life is supplemented by hundreds of hours of interviews the author conducted with Winnie. Winnie's story is told with her own words and gives us a rare insight into the life inside institutions as it is experienced by the people who live there.

TITLE: With the power of each breath: A disabled women's anthology

AUTHORS: Browne, S. E., Connors, D., & Stern, N. (Eds.)

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1985

Cleis Press, A Women's Publishing Company
P.O. Box 8933
Pittsburgh, PA 15221

The quality of writing of this collection of essays, poetry, interviews, and first-person accounts is uneven and the editors' articulate and informative introductions sometimes outshine the collected pieces. All the women who contribute to the book have a disability. Most of the book consists of first person accounts of being a female and having a disability, but a few conceptual pieces are also included. The stated purpose of the book is to '...bridge the gap that separates women with disabilities from one another and from the non-disabled world' (p. 10) and the book reflects these women's resistance against the silencing of women with disabilities. The editors set out with a strong political commitment to produce an anthology representative of all women with disabilities. Although that proved to be impossible the book addresses a broad spectrum of disability issues and the contributors cross the lines of race, age, class, sexual orientation, geographical location, and type of disabilities. The book also includes interviews with women who are labeled mentally retarded, a group which often has been excluded in the literature on women with disabilities. This book is born out of a group of women with disabilities who also are feminists and reflects their experiences of discrimination because of their disabilities in addition to the traditional sexism. The majority of the pieces in this book are angry and speak out with bitterness of the isolation, despair, and powerlessness women with disabilities face in their lives. Some of the pieces are both inspiring and very moving.

TITLE: Images of ourselves: Women with disabilities talking

AUTHOR: Campling, J. (Ed.)

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1981

London: Routledge & Kegan Paul

This is an anthology of 23 women writing short personal pieces about their lives. All the contributors have disabilities and span the years from adolescence to old age. The editor claims they come from a wide variety of backgrounds and from all over the country (Britain). But in fact most of the women seem to be from white middle class background and have higher than average education. The editor does not account for the women's racial background. All the women have physical disabilities. It is notable that many of the women were not born with a disability but acquired the disability later in life.

The editor introduces each contributor with a brief summary of the writer's background, age, and disability. The women write about their personal feelings and how they cope with their disabilities, emotionally and economically. They also reflect on how their roles in society and relationships with other people are affected by the disability.

TITLE: A shared presentation: Two disabled women on video

AUTHORS: Corbett, J., Jones, E., & Ralph, S.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1993

Disability, Handicap & Society, 8(2), 173-186.

In this article, the authors share their experiences about making a video in which disabled women present their lives and experiences as they wish to have them portrayed. They hope that this video will be seen as 'emancipatory research' in which disabled and non disabled women work together. Included in this article is a discussion of the representation of disability on British television, specifically focusing on negative and positive images and charities.

TITLE: Voices from the asylum

AUTHOR: Glenn, M. (Ed.)

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1974

Harper & Row
10 East 53rd Street
New York, NY 10022

This is a book about what goes on in mental hospitals and is written by people who have first hand knowledge of these institutions. It is primarily written by 'patients' (as the editor calls them), but also by attendants, doctors, and others. The editor states that most people who live in mental institutions come from society's oppressed groups; working people, poor people, cultural minorities, and women. He argues that the ruling class first creates conditions which drive people 'crazy' and then creates institutions where they are locked up and provided with 'treatment' which is often worse than their original problem. Part II, which is the largest part of the book, consists of first-person accounts where people tell of their experiences in mental hospitals. Almost all of the contributors to this section are women. The editor says that women were the ones who responded the most to his call for personal accounts and manuscripts, and argues that, 'This is no accident

Women have been especially oppressed by psychotherapy' (p. 51). Many of the women who contribute to this book describe the relationship between their gender-role and their mental problems.

TITLE: Frida: A biography of Frida Kahlo

AUTHOR: Herrera, H.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1983

Harper & Row
10 East 53rd Street
New York, NY 10022

Women with disabilities are rarely celebrated for their lives and contributions in the general literature. The biography of the legendary Mexican painter, Frida Kahlo, is a rare exemption. This extensive account of Frida's life and art describes her childhood in Mexico City during the Mexican Revolution; her stormy marriage to muralist Diego Rivera; her political activities; and her absorption in Mexican culture and folklore.

The book also describes Frida's disability which she acquired at the age of eighteen, when a bus she was riding on was rammed by a streetcar in Mexico City. In this accident Frida's spine was fractured, her pelvis crushed, and one foot broken. From that day, till her death twenty-nine years later, Frida lived with physical impairments which caused her considerable pain, constant threat of illness, and inability to have children.

The majority of Frida's paintings are self-portraits, many of which center around her pain and struggle with her disability. Painting herself bleeding, weeping, and cracked open, she transforms her pain into art with remarkable frankness tempered by humor and strength. Despite Frida's focus on her disability in her self-portraits, her autobiography in paint does not reflect self-pity, but a peculiar intensity and strength.

Frida died at the age of forty seven in 1954 and it was not till two decades after her death, that she became internationally known as a painter. Since the 1970s, her paintings have received increasing amount of attention and admiration. Today, Frida is celebrated as one of the greatest artists of the 20th century. The book is generously illustrated with 127 pictures of Frida's life and her powerful paintings, 35 of these illustrations are in color. A very powerful book.

TITLE: That time of year: A chronicle of life in a nursing home

AUTHOR: Horner, J.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1982

The University of Massachusetts Press
Box 429
Amherst, MA 01004

This book is a chronicle of Jocey Horner's life in a nursing home. Jocey Horner, a writer and a retired English professor, entered a nursing home in 1974 after becoming disabled by arthritis and a fall where she broke a number of bones. She lived in the nursing home for three years and kept a journal of her experiences. The book provides a very powerful description of these last three years of this one woman's life as well as giving insights into the lives of people who live in nursing homes in general.

TITLE: What happened to you? Writings by disabled women

AUTHOR: Keith, L. (Ed.)

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1996

New York: The New Press

Lois Keith compiled collections of fiction, essays, and poetry by disabled women in her new book, What happened to you? Her goal is to give women with disabilities a space to express their views on such topics as abuse, equality, sexuality, prejudice, and legislation dealing with disability issues. These narratives construct disability as a cultural and political issue, not only as a personal one.

TITLE: Mustn't grumble: Writings by disabled women

AUTHOR: Keith, L. (Ed.).

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1994

The Women's Press
34 Great Sutton Street
London, EC1 V 0DX
ENGLAND

This edited book, compiled by a disabled woman, presents writings by other women who have a range of physical disabilities. The short stories and poems included in this book range in topic from issues of accessibility to abuse to equality. Disability is framed by these narratives as a social, cultural, and political issue, not only as a personal one. This is an excellent account of disability issues from a woman's perspective. It is powerful, moving, and educating for all readers.

TITLE: Able lives: Women's experiences of paralysis

AUTHOR: Morris, J. (Ed.)

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1989

The Women's Press
34 Great Sutton Street
London, EC1 V 0DX
ENGLAND

This is a collection of stories and essays about being female and having a disability. The book grew out of a survey conducted by the Spinal Injuries Association in Great Britain and presents stories by women of all ages describing their lives after becoming disabled. The stories are very frank and straightforward and deal with diverse issues such as self-esteem, sex, incontinence, motherhood, and many more.

TITLE: The lives of women with mental retardation: A multiple minority perspective

AUTHOR: Olson, D. L.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1991

Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation
Syracuse University
Syracuse, New York 13244

This dissertation by Deborah Olson explores the lives of women labeled mentally retarded. She argues that this label, along with their gender has placed these women in the disadvantageous position of being in a multiple minority group. Through in depth interviews with five women labeled mentally retarded, Olson seeks to understand how they see themselves as women with mental retardation and how they interact with people who have impact on their lives. The major finding from his work is that women with a label of mental retardation are more prepared to handle disability discrimination than gender discrimination and that the women's movement has not provided them with the awareness of choices it has provided for other women who do not have cognitive disabilities.

TITLE: The me in the mirror

AUTHOR: Panzarino, C.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1994

Seattle: Seal Press

Written by writer, disability activist, and artist Connie Panzarino, The Me in the Mirror is an autobiography of the life of this amazing woman. Born with Spinal Muscular Atrophy Type III, a rare disease, Panzarino tells the story of her life as a disabled woman. She describes her life as one of struggles and triumphs, and tells the stories of her relationships with her family, friends, lovers, her turn to lesbianism, and of her years of pioneering work in the disability rights movement. This book is a must read for anyone interested in understanding the experiences of women with physical disabilities.

TITLE: Mad women

AUTHOR: Porter, R.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1987

In R. Porter (Ed.), A social history of madness: The world through the eyes of the insane (pp. 103-124).

Weidenfeld & Nicolson
10 East 23rd Street
New York, NY 10022

This chapter on 'mad women' is in a book that explores the lives of 'mad people' as they themselves recorded them. Much of the history of madness has focused on medicine or psychiatry. This book is different in that it attempts to explore the thoughts and feelings of mad people from earlier centuries and is based on their autobiographical writings. In the chapter on mad women the author reflects upon autobiographical writings by women and much of the chapter centers around madness and women's gender roles. The author is critical of traditional psychiatry and points out, among other things, that liberationalist psychiatry does not seem to have had a desire to free women from traditional gender roles.

TITLE: Disabled, female and proud! Ten stories of women with disabilities

AUTHOR: Rousso, H.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1988

Exceptional Parent Press
605 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215

This book is written by Harilyn Rousso, a woman with a disability, and illustrated with photographs by Flo Fox, a visually-impaired photographer. The book describes the lives of ten contemporary women with disabilities who offer their experiences and ideas about work, relationships, pregnancy, motherhood, life-styles, and how they got to where they are now. Each woman discusses the prejudice, barriers and difficulties she faced and offers advice to the reader about how to overcome these. The jobs these women hold span a variety of fields, some of them work in the creative arts; others in mathematics and science; some work in business; and others in human services. The ten women have various disabilities, and are of diverse age, race, class, and language backgrounds.

The book grew out of the work of Harilyn Rousso, a social worker and therapist, who created a big-sister project for women and girls with disabilities in New York City to address the lack of role models in the media and the community, for young women with disabilities. The book is intended to serve as a much needed resource to counteract the isolation so many women with disabilities experience in their struggles with work and life. It is also intended to provide positive role models for women and girls with disabilities.

TITLE: The handicapped speak out

AUTHOR: Roth, W.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1981

McFarland & Company, Inc.
Box 611
Jefferson, NC 28640

This book is based on interviews with thirteen people who all have disabilities, three children and ten adults. Seven of the people in the book are girls or women. In the introduction to the book the author says that the '...intent of the book is a learning, an active listening, a recognition of handicapped people themselves' (p. x). Each of the book's thirteen chapters presents the story of one individual. The chapters start with the authors introduction to the person but the main text of the chapter consists of the person's own account of his or her life presented as answers to the author's questions. The stories describe the everyday struggles, joys, hopes, dreams, anger, and frustrations around living in a society that acts with discomfort in the presence of people it defines as different. Some of the women describe candidly their experiences of being a female and having a disability. The women in this book all have a physical disability, which they acquired at different points in their lives, some were born with their disabilities while others acquired it as children or as adults. The women present a variation in terms of their economic background and the book includes women of cultural and racial minorities. Most of the chapters have pictures of the person.

TITLE: Lisa H.: The true story of an extraordinary and courageous woman

AUTHOR: Severo, R.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1985

Viking Penguin
40 West 23rd Street
New York, NY 10010

This is a true story of a young woman, Lisa H., who has neurofibromatosis, better known as 'Elephant Man's disease.' Lisa's disorder attacked her face with unusual fury, literally burying her face with tumors. The book describes Lisa's life till the age of twenty-one, when she underwent a radical plastic surgery to correct her facial deformities. While this is one of a very few descriptions of the lives of people with neurofibromatosis, this book is not the most positive portrayal of people dealing with this disorder. The book is very focused on Lisa's deformities and especially the medical and surgical procedures she went through in the course of her life. The author seems almost obsessed with the last radical surgery Lisa underwent and devotes long sections of the book to a gruesome and detailed description of the bloody eight hour surgery.

The author, Richard Severo, is a reporter who first intended to write only one article about Lisa's surgery, but ended up writing a book about her. Severo undoubtedly intends to be helpful to Lisa and other people with disabilities who confront social discrimination. But he does not manage to go beyond the very stereotyping he is hoping to expose and the book is more like a magazine article which calls for pity rather than respect for Lisa and outrage because of the discrimination she experiences.

TITLE: Roxene

AUTHOR: Stephenson, W.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1983

Detselig Enterprises
P.O. Box G 399
Calgary, Alberta T3A 2G3
CANADA

This is a story about Roxene, a Canadian girl with mental retardation of native Indian origin. It is a true story of Roxene's life which describes her childhood and her teenage years. Most of the book focuses on Roxene's relationship with Margaret vanBiert, who 'adopts' Roxene and becomes her friend, advocate, and legal guardian. Roxene is not very good with spoken words and her story is mostly told in vanBiert's words with additions based on the author's observations. We learn about Roxene's childhood with her family and how she, at the age of eight, ended up as a ward of the courts and was moved to a group home far away from her family who lived on an Indian reserve. The description of the friendship between Roxene and Margaret is the best part of this story.

TITLE: Why can't Sharon Kowalski come home?

AUTHOR: Thompson, K. & Andrezejewski, J.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1988

Spinsters/Aunt Lute
P.O. Box 410687
San Francisco, CA 94141

This is a book about a lesbian couple, Karen Thompson and Sharon Kowalski, who had lived together for a few years when Sharon was seriously injured in a car crash when her car was struck by a drunk driver. Sharon, then 27, suffered severe brain injury leaving her unable to move and communicate in traditional ways. The book describes the long period of rehabilitation where Karen played an important part in Sharon's recovery. It also tells us how Karen's hope of bringing Sharon back to their home ended in a bitter struggle with Sharon's parents. Much of the book centers around the legal battle between Sharon's parents and Karen, which resulted in a court ruling where Sharon's father was made her legal guardian and forbade Karen visitation rights. The book also describes Karen's continuing struggle to bring Sharon home and how this struggle transformed Karen into an activist and made her aware of how sexism, handicapism, homophobia, and other issues of oppression are related. This very powerful and chilling book is written by Karen Thompson, Sharon's lover, and Judy Andrzejewski, a feminist educator and activist, who supported Karen through this ordeal and served as her advisor in the struggle. An appendix to the book addresses the legal measures that can be taken by gay, lesbian or unmarried adults who wish to authorize lovers or friends to make medical decisions on their behalf if they become incapacitated. The appendix also includes forms offering guidelines as to what steps can be taken to ensure, ahead of time, that people's wishes will be respected.

TITLE: Somebody, somewhere: Breaking free from the world of autism

AUTHOR: Williams, D.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1994

New York: Times Books

This autobiography by Donna Williams poignantly and defiantly illustrates her life and struggle with autism. She powerfully articulates her 'awakening to the world' and how she fought for others to do the same. She presents her perspective of autism and reminds the readers that it is crucial that they seek to understand her perspective and the perspectives of others with autism rather that imposing their own notions onto someone else. She asserts that she has taken control of her autism, that it does not control her.

TITLE: No apologies

AUTHOR: Wry Crips

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1994

Wry Crips
Disabled Women's Theatre
P.O. Box 21474
Oakland, CA 94620
Phone# (510) 601-5819

This 28-minute video is by Wry Crips Disabled Women's Theater, which is a comedy troupe of women who are at the forefront of the disability culture movement in the San Francisco Bay area. It is comprised of disabled and able bodied women of diverse racial, social, and class background. Wry Crips uses humor as a form of resistance. Their performances, comprised of poetry, readings, signing, performing skits, and reading narratives, all resist either medical paradigms, social stereotypes, economic oppression, or individualist assumptions regarding disability issues. The women of Wry Crips embrace disability, seeing beauty and acceptance where able bodied people only see difference and abnormality.

FURTHER RESOURCES: Life Histories and Personal Accounts

Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness
June 1983, 77(6)

American Foundation for the Blind
15 West 16th Street
New York, NY 10011

This special issue is devoted to the theme 'Being blind, being a woman,' and contains, among other things, a review of over thirty autobiographies and biographies of blind and visually impaired women.

EDUCATION

While all students, males and females, with and without disabilities are subject to sex-biased assumptions in most schools and curriculum, research seems to indicate that sex-role stereotyping may be even more pervasive when students have disabilities. This seems to hold true for all levels of education. The writings listed in this section address the education of women and girls with disabilities from various points of view including a personal account of being a girl with a disability in elementary school; the situation of young women with disabilities in higher education; and research on sex-role stereotyping in text books for children with disabilities. This section reflects that there does not seem to be much literature on educational issues. Those who are interested in the combination between education and employment are advised to look for materials in the section on employment and rehabilitation.

TITLE: Smashing icons: Disabled women and the disability and women's movement

AUTHOR: Blackwell-Stratton, M, Breslin, M., Mayerson, A.B., & Bailey, S.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1988

In M. Fine & A. Asch (Eds.), Women with disabilities: Essays in psychology, culture, and politics.

Temple University Press
Broad and Oxford Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19122

This chapter does not solely focus on education but it includes a fairly long section describing the historical struggle for the right for education for women in general and relates it to the lack of educational opportunities for women with disabilities today.

TITLE: Female and disabled: Challenged women in education

AUTHOR: Davis, M., & Marshall, C.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1987

Perspectives, 5(3), 39-41 (Published by the National Women's Studies Association).

This article describes the challenges women with disabilities face in higher education and grew out of a workshop designed to enable participants to discuss the needs women with disabilities have in higher education. The article addresses the issues and weaves in the experiences of a panel of women with disabilities who were present at the workshop. The authors describe their difficulties in finding women with disabilities representing a diversity in careers, the reason being that the vast majority of women with disabilities are clustered into two fields: rehabilitation counseling and special education. Only few seem to manage to break free from the expectation that women with disabilities should 'choose' a career where they work with people with disabilities. The article reports that research indicates that one out of every six women with disabilities has less than eight years of formal education, compared to one out of every twenty-eight non-disabled women. Furthermore, women with disabilities are only half as likely as non-disabled women to have any college education. The authors conclude by stating that while there has been significant progress in enabling children with disabilities to receive public education they question whether the progress has been made in enabling women with disabilities to receive an appropriate higher education.

TITLE: Lessons from life: Personal and parental perspectives on school, childhood, and disability

AUTHOR: Ferguson, P. M., & Asch, A.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1989

In D. Biklen, D. Ferguson, & A. Ford (Eds.), Schooling and disability, (pp. 108-140).

University of Chicago Press
5801 Ellis Avenue
Chicago, IL 60637

This chapter draws upon personal narratives of people with disabilities and their parents as well as the authors' personal experiences. One of the authors, Adrienne Asch, is blind; the other, Philip M. Ferguson, is a father of a young man with a disability. Weaving together people's personal accounts of having a disability and their own experiences the authors discuss various issues that have to do with schooling and disability. Those who are interested in learning about how girls with disabilities experience schools should find Adrienne Asch's descriptions of her school years an interesting reading.

TITLE: The disabled women's education project: Report of survey results

AUTHOR: Disability Rights, Education, and Defense Fund

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1983

Disability Rights, Education, and Defense Fund
1616 P Street, N.W., Suite 100
Washington, DC 20036

This reports the results of a survey of 8,000 people with disabilities around educational issues. The survey found, among other things, that girls with physical disabilities were more likely than boys with physical disabilities to be placed in segregated special schools. The authors suggest that these differences stem from the assumption that males must support themselves and therefore need a better education. The survey also suggests that women with disabilities tend to receive counseling that channels them into lower paying jobs rather than highly paid, high status professions.

TITLE: The influence of sexism on education of handicapped children

AUTHORS: Gillespie, P., & Fink, A.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1974

Exceptional Children, 41(3).

The authors of this article suggest that sex-role stereotyping is especially pervasive for children who have mental disabilities and behavioral problems. These children tend to be taught traditional sex-role modes of behavior because that will supposedly enable them to better adjust to society. The authors also claim that schoolbooks for children with disabilities tend to include stories and illustrations that are deliberately sex-role stereotypical in order to foster this adjustment.

TITLE: Breaking tradition: Planning and organizing a conference on education and employment opportunities

AUTHOR: Jones, R.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1983

Journal of Visual Impairments and Blindness, 77(6), 274-276.

This article describes how diverse groups worked together to stage an unprecedented conference focusing on education, employment, and career-planning needs of blind and visually impaired women. This was an all-day conference held in New York, November 6, 1982. The title of the conference was 'Breaking tradition: Education and career opportunities for blind and visually impaired women.'

TITLE: What happens after school? A study of disabled women and education

AUTHORS: O'Toole, C., & Weeks, C.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1978

Women's Educational Equity Communication Network
San Francisco

Available from ERIC Document Reproduction Services
(Identification #ED-166894)

Through interviews with six women the authors explore the experiences women with disabilities have had of education and employment. This includes early experiences of school and family, high school years, college, and work after school. Included are suggestions for educators and parents, and a detailed resource list on legal rights of people with disabilities.

TITLE: The expansion of educational opportunities

AUTHOR: Roberts, F. K.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1983

Journal of Visual Impairments and Blindness, 77(6), 282-285.

This article reviews some of the attitudes and realities that create barriers and affect decisions about the education of visually impaired women. The author claims that stereotyped attitudes toward women and toward disabled people place women with visual impairments in double jeopardy with regard to education and career choices. The article also reviews counseling resources and discussed sexist attitudes by school and career counselors. Finally the article reviews educational opportunities for visually impaired women who want to pursue higher education.

EMPLOYMENT AND REHABILITATION

Most of the writings listed in this section explore the discrimination against women with disabilities within rehabilitation and other special services, as well as in the labor market in general. Except for two articles: one exploring the relationship between women's work and mental health and one reporting sex-differences in employment for people with mental retardation, this section reflects the fact that most of the writing in this area has focused on women with physical impairments or disabilities.

TITLE: Disabled women in the social structure

AUTHOR: Altman, B.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1987

In S. C. Hey, G. Kiger, & J. Seidel (Eds.), Impaired and disabled people in society: Structure, processes and the individual (pp. 332-348). Salem, OR: The Society for Disability Studies and Willamette University.

This chapter examines the access of women with disabilities to rehabilitation and their receipt of financial assistance, in an attempt to identify the structural patterns of discrimination against women. The author states that although rehabilitation and financial assistance are society's major answers to the problems of disabled people, only a small proportion of this population actually receive any kind of rehabilitation. The author also states that women with disabilities seem to be less likely to receive both rehabilitation and disability benefits than men are. Using data from the Bureau of Census she also shows that age is a significant variable when it comes to rehabilitation; younger people are more likely to be rehabilitated while older people are more likely to receive financial assistance. Finally the author states that the disadvantage women with disability experience are increased by the dependent identity already associated with being female.

This article by Barbara Altman is also published in Browne, Connors, & Stern (1985). With the power of each breath: A disabled women's anthology, in a slightly different version.

TITLE: Labor marked discrimination against women with disabilities

AUTHOR: Baldwin, M., & Johnson, W. G.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1995

Industrial Relations, 34(4), 555-577.

The authors examine through quantitative research the extend of wage discrimination and the employment effects of wage discrimination against women with disabilities. None of these women had severe disabilities which are usually subject to high levels of prejudice. The authors found that the wage differentials attributed to disability discrimination were relatively small, perhaps because the women in the study had disabilities which were subject to little prejudice. However, they point out that the total burden of discrimination is large because these employees also experience gender discrimination. Despite this, the authors do not show that gender related discrimination is worse for women who have a disability.

TITLE: Across borders: Women with disabilities working together

AUTHOR: Driedger, D., Feika, I., & Batres, E. G. (Eds).

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1996

Gynergy Books
P.O. Box 2023
Charlottetown, PEI C1A 7N7
CANADA

This edited book with an international perspective highlights the experiences of women with disabilities working together. Each chapter is written by disabled women leaders and explore how women with primarily physical disabilities join together to demand participation in society, and document their experiences of working together and of forming disabled women's self help groups. Across Borders begins with a description of the growth of the disability movement worldwide and discusses the issues facing women with disabilities in the areas of employment, education, attitudes, and violence. The essays are grouped by region, and also include poetry and photographs.

TITLE: Demographic analysis related to successful job retention for competitively employed persons who are mentally retarded

AUTHORS: Hill, J. W., Hill, M., Wehman, P., Banks, P. D., Pendleton, P., & Britt, C.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1985

In P. Wehman & J. W. Hill (Eds.), Competitive employment for persons with mental retardation: from research to practice (Vol. I).

Rehabilitation Research and Training Center
School of Education
Virginia Commonwealth University
Richmond, VA 23284-0001

This is a long term study of 155 people with mental retardation age 16-66, who were placed in various competitive jobs by one supported employment program. The study focuses on the demographic characteristics of these people and their families and relates those to a successful vocational outcome defined as '...retention in employment six months after the date of first placement' (p. 69). Among the findings were that the majority of people being placed through the program were males, or 66%, while females represented only 34% of those who received jobs through the program. The study also reports that males were more likely to reach the successful retention rate of 6 months, or 70%, compared to 55% of the females. The authors discuss possible reasons for this gender inequality. Although this study does not focus solely on the disadvantaged employment status of women with mental retardation it is a significant contribution because it is perhaps the only study that has examined gender differences in employment of people with mental retardation.

TITLE: Toward a model of factors influencing the hiring of women with a history of breast cancer

AUTHORS: Kutner, N. G., & Gray, H. L.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1985

In M. J. Deegan & N. A. Brooks (Eds.), Women and disability: The double handicap (pp. 117-132).

Transaction Books
Rutgers University
New Brunswick, NJ 08903

This chapter is a study of what influences employers' decision to hire women who have had breast cancer. While most former studies have examined the experiences of job applicants, this study examines the perspective of the employer. The authors surveyed a random sample of personnel directors from an industrialized North Carolina county and found that the majority of them had personal experiences with breast cancer patients and had had mastectomy employees leave work. The study suggests that the following five factors explain much of the hiring practices: size of the company, level of sick leave benefits, company involvement with employees' medical insurance, employers' education, and personal experience with breast cancer. The level of knowledge about cancer did not predict the hiring decision. Thus, many of the hiring practices were determined by organizational factors and the personal characteristics of the employer. The decision to hire or not to hire former breast cancer patients was not based on medical factors. Most of the factors which determined the decision to hire women with breast cancer had nothing to do with the individual woman, instead the decision to hire was more likely to be determined by the employers' personal experiences with women who have had breast cancer. These findings suggest that the decision whether to hire women with breast cancer can have discriminatory overtones.

TITLE: Benefits for the disabled: How beneficial for women?

AUTHOR: Kutza, E. A.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1985

In M. J. Deegan, & N. A. Brooks (Eds.), Women and disability: The double handicap (pp. 68-86).

Transaction Books
Rutgers University
New Brunswick, NJ 08903

This chapter examines the impact of current U.S. disability policy on women with disabilities. The author examines some of the major programs designed to assist people with disabilities, such as disability insurance, supplemental security income, workers' compensation and vocational rehabilitation. She argues that because of the relationship of these programs to labor market participation, these programs disadvantage women. Not only do women receive fewer benefits than men, they also receive lower benefits. The author concludes that there is an urgent need for reassessment of the impact of current disability policy on women with disabilities because current disability programs do not protect women with disabilities from economic threats associated with disability.

TITLE: Disabled women and public policies for income support

AUTHOR: Mudrick, N. A.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1988

In M. Fine & A. Asch (Eds.), Women with disabilities: Essays in psychology, culture, and politics (pp. 245-268).

Temple University Press
Broad and Oxford Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19122

In this chapter Nancy Mudrick examines the influence of income support programs on the lives of women with disabilities. She argues that women with disabilities are frequently poor as a result of their double disadvantage. First, women with disabilities are, similar to all other women, disadvantaged with respect to wages and employment. Second, they face additional difficulties as persons with disabilities. Mudrick demonstrates that income support is a crucial component of the very meager incomes women with disabilities depend upon. Despite the crucial importance of public income support for the livelihood of women with disabilities, benefits are usually both less accessible and smaller for women with disabilities than for men with disabilities.

Mudrick discusses the reasons for this unequal distribution of benefits between men and women with disabilities. She suggests that part of this difference may be a result of the poor fit between women's work patterns and the design of the programs, and part of the problem is rooted in societal attitudes toward women's economic roles and women's family roles, as well as societal attitudes toward women and men with disabilities.

TITLE: America's disability policy: Another double standard?

AUTHOR: Quinn, P.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1994

Affilia, 9(1), 45-59.

Written from a social work perspective, the author states that disability policy does not take gender into account, nor does it acknowledge society's view as gender and disability doubling a woman's dependence. Quinn argues that social workers need to be prepared to support women with disabilities to obtain their services and benefits. Furthermore, she reviews some economic and social effects of disability policy and concludes with a set of questions which can be used by social workers in order to more successfully provide services to their female clients who have disabilities.

TITLE: Region V study of access, services and benefits from vocational rehabilitation 1972 to 1984: A gender perspective

AUTHORS: Region V Research Study Group

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1987

Research and Training Center
Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute
School of Education and Human Services
University of Wisconsin-Stout
Menomonie, WI 54751

This is a report from a three year research project. The focus of the study was equity in the delivery of rehabilitation services to men and women. The purpose was to determine whether there were systematic gender differences along input, program, and output dimensions in the state vocational rehabilitation programs in Region V over a 13 year period; 1972-1984. Data for the study were drawn from data files that are submitted annually by each state agency to the Rehabilitation Services Administration. The results indicate a serious problem of inequity in the impacts of the vocational rehabilitation program on men and women with disabilities. The research clearly demonstrated that women did not acquire financial resources and occupational success at the conclusion of rehabilitation comparable to those achieved by men.

The report raises very direct issues regarding the current situation and makes some suggestions about change in policy, procedure, and practices in rehabilitation programs that can address the inequalities in access, services and outcomes for men and women with disabilities. This report should be of interest to people working within rehabilitation services as well as the people who use these services. Those interested in combining gender and disability issues would also find this an interesting study. The main problem with the report is that it uses technical language and is not very readable.

The January/February/March 1989 issue of the Journal of Rehabilitation has an article which also reports on findings of this study. The article covers similar issues as the report. The authors are Menz, Hansen, Smith, Brown, Ford, & McCrowey and the title is 'Gender equity in access, services and benefits from vocational rehabilitation.'

TITLE: Women, work, and disability: Opportunities and challenges

AUTHOR: Russo, N. F., & Jansen, M. A.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1988

In M. Fine & A. Asch (Eds.), Women with disabilities: Essays in psychology, culture, and politics (pp. 229-244).

Temple University Press
Broad and Oxford Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19122

This chapter examines the employment of women with disabilities in the context of the changes in women's labor force participation in general. The past few decades have seen a revolutionary increase in women's participation in the paid labor force, especially noticeable has been the increased number of working mothers, and this has significantly influenced the national employment policy. The authors argue that women with disabilities have not been a part of the women's employment revolution and that employment policies still assume that working women are able-bodied. Very little attention has been devoted to the disadvantaged employment status of women with disabilities. While men with disabilities have serious employment problems, women with disabilities are significantly worse off. For example, compared to men, women with disabilities are less likely to receive quality training for competitive employment. The authors also demonstrate how the economy in general, and the specialized disability services in particular, restrict the employment opportunities and lives of women with disabilities. The chapter also addresses opportunities and challenges for research, education, and rehabilitation strategies designed to change the situation.

TITLE: Women and work: Implications for mental health

AUTHOR: Sales, E., & Frieze, I. H.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1984

In L. E. Walker (Ed.), Women and mental health policy (pp. 229-246).

Sage Publications
P.O. Box 5084
Newbury Park, CA 91359

One of the most noted social trends in recent decades is the dramatic increase in women's labor force participation. This chapter examines what implications this may have for women's mental health. Because women have been heavy users of mental health services some authors have suggested that women's increased labor force participation, especially mothers with young children, might increase stress and result in more mental health problems. Others have suggested that because work is central to adult adjustment and a major source of satisfaction, women's increased labor force participation should have the opposite effect: it should improve their mental health. After a thorough review of the literature on the topic the authors conclude that the evidence regarding the mental health consequences of work for women shows many positive relationships while few negative effects have been found. They state that work is clearly a source of self-esteem and satisfaction for most women. They also point out that the group of women who are most at risk of having mental health problems are non-white, nonmarried, nonemployed women, and women who lived in social isolation with limited roles. This suggests that the women who may most need mental health services may be those not in the work arena, especially women who are isolated or homebound because of young children or limited social roles.

TITLE: Research by/for/with women with disabilities

AUTHOR: Wight-Felske, A.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1990

The Roeher Institute
Kinsmen Building, York University
4700 Keele Street
North York, Ontario M3J 1P3
CANADA

The Roeher Institute is a Canadian based advocacy institution for people with cognitive disabilities. Their aims include community based living, jobs, and support, and providing information about issues concerning disability rights. This specific publication has been written to raise the awareness of researchers to the issue of disability and to give a voice to women with disabilities. Specifically, it outlines the ways in which women with disabilities have been excluded from research, provides a framework for research for and with women with disabilities, presents a guideline for non-stereotyping language, and also addresses the ways in which people can be informed about women and disabilities.

FURTHER RESOURCES:
Employment and Rehabilitation

President's Committee on
Employment of the Handicapped
Washington, DC 20210
(202) 653-5044

The President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped is a good source of data on employment issues of people with disabilities, including women with disabilities. Among them is a much cited report, Disabled women in America: A statistical report drawn from census data (Bowe, 1984). This report (reviewed in the section on general issues) devotes a lot of attention to the employment status of women with disabilities. Free copies can be obtained from the Committee. For more information about this report and other resources on employment contact the address above.

Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness
June 1983, 77(6)

American Foundation for the Blind
15 West 16th Street
New York, NY 10011

This issue of the journal is devoted to the theme 'Being blind, being a woman,' and contains, among other things, a number of articles on rehabilitation, vocational counseling, and employment for visually impaired women. The journal also contains a special 20-page insert on education, employment, and career opportunities for blind and visually impaired women.

HEALTH ISSUES

The specific health needs of women with disabilities seem to have been ignored for the most part by writers in the disability field, as well as by the women's health movement. Listed below are two recent women's health books which have included women with disabilities and two pieces that address health issues for this group of women. The resources in this area seem to be scarce and hard to find. This section ends with a list of women's health journals which include women with disabilities.

TITLE: The new our bodies, ourselves: A book by and for women

AUTHOR: The Boston's Women's Health Book Collective

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1993

Simon & Schuster
Rockefeller Center
1230 Avenue of the Americans
New York, NY 10020

When Our bodies, ourselves was first published in 1969 there was practically no information easily available about women's health issues. The first publication of this book encouraged many women to explore the health issues most important to them. This new edition of Our bodies, ourselves has been considerably expanded from previous editions of the book. One of the additions is the inclusion of women who have disabilities and a disability perspective is presented in most chapters. Our bodies, ourselves has finally become a book on women's health issues for all women. Hopefully this book will serve as a model as to how other generic books on women's health, education, sexual abuse, and so on, can include disability issues as an integral part of the topic. Although the authors should be praised for including women with disabilities it should also be mentioned that some issues of importance to women with disabilities get much less attention than needed. Examples of this are the problems some disabilities can cause during pregnancy and childbirth.

TITLE: A guide to feminist family therapy

AUTHOR: Braverman, L. (Ed.)

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1988

Harrington Park Press
12 West 32nd Street
New York, NY 10001

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This collection includes chapters written by scholars from a variety of mental health disciplines. All the authors are practicing psychotherapists who have struggled with the problems of integrating a feminist perspective with the practice of family therapy. The book provides an overview of theoretical developments in feminist family therapy, describes how to apply a feminist-sensitive perspective in the treatment of women, and discusses the implications of a feminist-sensitive perspective to therapy training and supervision in family therapy.

The collection is divided into three sections dealing with theoretical issues, clinical applications, and supervision and training issues respectively. The collection starts out by providing a historical review of the literature which has attempted to integrate feminist issues and family therapy. The following chapters address diverse issues such as criticism of family systems theory as a model for treatment for women; abuse and violence against women; lesbian mothers and lesbian daughters; women in alcoholic families; and women and eating disorders. The collection concludes with an essay on teaching an integrated model of family therapy. Also included is an annotated bibliography which lists readings on feminist critique of family therapy, feminist theory and frameworks, feminist critique of the family, research on women and mental health, and contemporary theory and research on women's development. In short, this book contains a wealth of information for those interested in a feminist approach to women's mental health problems and family therapy.

TITLE: Ourselves growing older

AUTHOR: Doress, P. B., & Siegal, D. L.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1987

(In conjunction with the Midlife and Older Women's Book Project and The Boston's Women's Health Book Collective.)

Simon & Schuster
Rockefeller Center
1230 Avenue of the Americans
New York, NY 10020

Like its predecessor, Our bodies ourselves, this book builds upon the tradition of self-help and focuses on prevention and changes to create healthier life-styles. It is aimed at promoting self-acceptance of older and middle aged women by themselves and stresses the empowerment of midlife and older women in confronting the challenges of growing older. This is an informative book which covers a wide range of topics, including a variety of physical and mental ailments common to middle age and older women. Included throughout the text are practical tips for dealing with specific physical and mental problems. A resource guide in the back of the book lists articles of interest, a guide to community services and support groups. A good resource book.

TITLE: Special sisters: Health issues for mentally retarded women

AUTHOR: Sank, C., & Lafleche, E.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1981

Off Our Backs, 11(5), 26-27

This article identifies and examines some of the health issues for women with mental retardation as well as describing the medical abuses this group of women has suffered from. Women with mental retardation have been especially vulnerable to forced sterilization, institutional abuse, medical experimentation and sexual abuse. They have been denied basic reproduction rights and some of the myths about women with mental retardation, such as the myth that they have uncontrollable sexuality, are still very much alive today. The authors criticize the women's health movement for ignoring women with mental retardation; they have not been included in self-help groups, their issues have not been raised in women's health books, and feminist resource books have not listed services that meet their needs. This is a very good article that raises many important issues that are rarely discussed elsewhere.

TITLE: Women with disabilities: A survey of health-related experiences

AUTHOR: Savage, A., & Georgeson, S.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1989

The Disabled Persons Assembly (NZ), Inc.
P.O. Box 143, 629 Main Street
Palmerston North, New Zealand

This book from New Zealand documents health experiences of women with disabilities. It is based on interviews with 60 women from three disability categories: 34 of the women had physical disabilities, 12 had intellectual disabilities, and 12 had psychiatric disabilities. The authors conclude by summarizing some of the findings of the study, and state that the experiences of these women show some fundamental issues about health and the health services they receive. Among the things they list are (1) lack of information regarding women with disabilities about the nature of their disability, as well as the implications of these disabilities; (2) lack of information about services available for women with disabilities; (3) the unequal relationship between health professionals and women with disabilities; (4) women with disabilities are not listened to and are excluded from decision making about their own health; (5) lack of information about side effects of medications; (6) disability is negatively viewed by health professionals and the general public alike; (7) women with disabilities fear being integrated into a community that does not have the resources to support them; and (8) women with disabilities view the availability of both personal and community support as vital.

The last section of the book provides recommendations for change based on the findings of the study.

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FURTHER RESOURCES:
Health Issues

Psychology of Women Quarterly
December 1988, 12(4)

Cambridge University Press
32 East 57th Street
New York, NY 10022

This journal is a special issue on 'Women's health: Our minds, our bodies,' and contains eight articles by academic or clinical psychologists. All the authors are women who use a feminist framework to analyze a variety of issues in women's health issues such as AIDS, disability, midlife childbearing, abortion, breast self-examination, and menopausal sexuality.

Women and Health
A quarterly scholarly journal on women's health issues

Haworth Press
10 Alice Street
Binghamton, NY 13904

Many of the articles published in this journal deal with chronic disease and disabling health conditions. The publishers have a toll free number: 1-800-342-9678.

Broomstick
A periodical by, for, and about women over forty

Broomstick
3543 18th Street, #3
San Francisco, CA 94110

This periodical is published bimonthly and frequently includes articles about disabilities. It is free to women over 40 in prison. Tel. (415) 522-7460

WOMEN AND CARE

This new section was added given the recent attention in disability studies to the concept of women's work. Women do the majority of the day to day care of people with disabilities, including personal care, community care and inclusion, work in human service fields, and in friendships; yet for the most part, their efforts go unnoticed. Far too often, the work that women do is understood as natural, or as an inherent part of being a woman. However, this research demonstrates that women as caregivers is not a role that comes naturally for women, it is negotiated and maintained by social interactions. This social construction of women as caregivers continues throughout their lives, and has powerful consequences on the way that their work is understood.

Also included in this section are discussions by women with disabilities who argue that the person being care for is often left out of the discussions of caring and caring relationships, and that this subject needs immediate attention. These writers assert that the conversation in this area should be located around equitable relationships between the women who care and the women who are being cared for.

TITLE: Caring work and gender equity in an aging society

AUTHOR: Allen, J.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1993

In J. Allen, & A. Pifer (Eds.), Women on the front lines: Meeting the challenges of an aging America. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute Press.

The author discusses how different aspects of the demand for care for elderly people might promote or hinder the integration of family care with paid employment and of caring work between men and women. Allen argues that without significant policy changes, the growing number of elderly people who need care will place an additional burden on women, who do the majority of the caring work. These women may have to sacrifice job earnings and health insurance, among other things, in order to care for elderly family members. The author outlines two proposed reforms in terms of gender equity issues, expanding paid home care, and creating government mandates for job leaves for family care.

TITLE: Caregiving too much? American women and the nation's caregiving crisis

AUTHORS: Foster, S. E., & Brizius, J.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1993

In J. Allen, & A Pifer (Eds.), Women on the front lines: Meeting the challenges of an aging American. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute Press.

The authors of this chapter respond to what they consider a 'crisis of caregiving.' This crisis stems from the fact that women spend more time than men caring for an elderly parent or an elderly spouse (about 80% of women do the caregiving). The majority of these women are also in the workforce, which means that essentially have two jobs, one caregiving and one at work. These changes in women's lives have resulted in financial, emotional, and physical stress for women. The authors suggest ways in which public policy can help alleviate this crisis. They suggest numerous financial changes and preventative measures. They also argue that services for caregivers need to be expanded and they encourage men to take more responsibility for caregiving.

TITLE: Feminist perspectives of family care: Policies for gender justice

AUTHOR: Hooyman, N. R., & Gonyea, J.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1995

Sage Publications
P.O. Box 5084
Newbury Park, CA 91359

Hooyman and Gonyea critically examine the act of caregiving through a feminist perspective. Given that over 75% of care provided to family members is provided by women, the authors analyze the impact of this caring on women's economical, social, and personal experiences. Furthermore, they examine how changing economic structures, changing families, and the changing workforce have affected the lives of women who provide care. The authors argue for structural changes in the economy, social institutions, and attitudes in order to improve the lives of women. Hooyman and Gonyea also explore the implications for social policy if caregiving is defined as a women's role and how current social policies are oppressive to women. Their recommendations for change includes workplace supports, health care and long term care policies, and economic and social supports for caregivers.

TITLE: Caregivers and difference

AUTHOR: Hillyer, B.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1993

In B. Hillyer, Feminism and disability (pp. 176-192). Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.

University of Oklahoma Press
1005 Asp Avenue
Norman, OK 73019-0445

This chapter of Feminism and disability focuses on three main issues around caregiving. Hillyer explores the relationship of caregiving to women's role conditioning, to class barriers between caregivers, and to using caregiving networks to further explore feminist discussion of difference. She discusses how women have been conditioned to be caregivers and encouraged to be self sacrificing, and that feminist discourse needs to challenge these assumptions.

She further asserts that class and status play a role in women's caregiving. She argues that numerous caregivers are in financially difficult situations (either because they have given up their jobs to become caregivers or because they are paid caregivers in the low income range) and that these paid caregivers are often from ethnic minorities. These factors are usually different from the women they care for, and therefore ethnic minorities or women from lower incomes are not seen as valued in a caregiving situation. They are not in the discussions around caring and what is best for the person being cared for. In addition, these women are silenced in the sense that their stories and experiences do not easily cross class and status boundaries, thereby making it difficult for the carer and the person being cared for to understand each other.

To help deal with this dilemma, Hillyer argues that caregiving networks can be used to explore the feminist discussion difference. She feels that it is crucial to be able to listen to other women caregivers' stories and to value these experiences. This in turn could lead to consciousness raising groups and political action.

TITLE: Who cares wins? Women, caring, and disability

AUTHOR: Keith, L.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1992

Disability, Handicap & Society, 7(2), 167-176.

Keith's article provides an argument for research which does not alienate disabled people while researching who cares for them. Too often, she asserts, feminist research on carers excludes the rights, power, and independence of disabled people and only depicts them as passive, helpless, and demanding. The author calls for the reconceptualization of research around the issue of care to make sure that all voices are represented, not only the voice of the person giving care. She offers as part of the solution the concept of citizenship and its affiliation with basic universal human rights as a way to fill this gap in research and in understanding the caring relationship.

TITLE: Feminist research and "community care"

AUTHOR: Morris, J.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1991

In J. Morris, Pride against prejudice: Transforming attitudes to disability (pp. 146-168). Pittsburgh: New Society Publishers.

New Society Publishers
4527 Springfield Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19143

In this chapter, Morris argues that while feminists have paid much attention to 'community care' policies, they have virtually ignored the experiences of disabled women. She asserts that feminist concerns about women's roles as caregivers must be re-examined from a disability perspective. Traditionally, feminists have rejected community care policies which depend on women's unpaid labor in the home, thereby excluding women from the labor market and reinforcing their economic dependence on men. While these feminists would call for community care in residential settings, Morris argues that disabled people want services within the community, and therefore reject the traditional feminist view of community care.

The author claims that the differences between these two views is because the feminists who are writing and researching in the area of women and care do not actually need physical care themselves. In ignoring the experiences of those women who need care, they silence disabled women and force them into the role of the other. These feminists only see women as carers, not as those being cared for, thereby legitimizing one side and marginalizing the other.

In response to these feminists, Morris offers a critique from a disabled feminist perspective. She argues that research needs to examine the meaning of `caring for' and `caring about' and especially the meaning of home (separated from the political feminist critique of the family). She asserts the feminist scholarship needs to understand this issue from a disability perspective and to see as the goal disabled women living in the community and receiving supports from caregivers whose work is valued, appreciated, and adequately compensated.

TITLE: Independent lives: Community care and disabled people

AUTHOR: Morris, J.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1993

London: Macmillan Press

This book is a qualitative study which explores the experiences of disabled people who receive help with daily living activities. Based on in-depth interviews with 50 people and using a feminist perspective and a disability rights perspective, Morris challenges the discourse around community care policies. She illustrates how residential care is often replaced by institutionalization in community settings, and further challenges policy makers and those who provide care to recognize the basic civil rights of people with disabilities, and that part of their civil rights is to receive physical help.

TITLE: The politics of caregiving

AUTHOR: Munford, R.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1994

In M. H. Rioux & M. Back (Eds.), Disability is not measles: New research paradigms in disability (pp. 265-284). North York, ON: Roeher Institute.

The Roeher Institute
Kinsmen Building, York University
4700 Keele Street
North York, Ontario M3J 1P3
CANADA

This chapter explores the meaning of care to those who give and receive it in order to challenge the current way it is organized. It examines the ways in which the caregiving relationship can be changed and how alliances with people with intellectual disabilities can be formed. The author bases her argument on the premise that non-disabled researchers and writers need to situate themselves in the research project and in the particular situation they are writing about.

Munford's chapter is divided into three sections. The first section provides a context by discussing important influences on the researcher and writing process. She argues that researchers must understand how their research can reinforce the powerlessness of those they are researching. She feels that researchers need to form equitable relationships with the people with disabilities whom they are researching. The second section focuses on important concepts in the caring relationship which are necessary to understand what happens in a caregiving relationship. The third section explores the role of social policy in constructing the lives of people with disabilities. The author argues for the importance of examining social policy in terms of disability of a social and political category. Hopefully then social policies will have possibilities for choice and empowerment for people with disabilities.

TITLE: A mother's work is never done: Constructing a 'normal' family life

AUTHOR: Traustadottir, R.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1995

In S. J. Taylor, R. Bogdan, & Z. M. Lutfiyya (Eds.), The variety of community experience: Qualitative studies of family and community life (pp. 47-65). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 10624
Baltimore, MD 21285-0624

The author examines the everyday lives of families of children with disabilities. She explores the ways in which the family attempts to construct an 'ordinary' or 'normal' family life. Traustadottir analyzes the gendered organization involved in constructing and maintaining a normal family life. Through qualitative research based on interviews and participant observation, Traustadottir found that families of children with disabilities devote much time trying to lead a 'normal' family life. For the most part this meant following the traditional family pattern of full time wife and mother and working father. She suggests that presence of disability in the family causes parents to compensate by conforming as closely as possible to traditional gender roles.

The author also discusses implications for professionals, stating that they need to be aware of individual perspectives of families. She also addresses how broader socio-cultural issues such as class, race, ethnicity, and gender influence the lives of families of children with disabilities.

TITLE: Disability reform and the role of women: Community inclusion and caring work

AUTHOR: Traustadottir, R.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1992

Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation
Syracuse University
Syracuse, NY 13244

This dissertation is a feminist qualitative study of the role of women in the community inclusion of people with developmental disabilities. The author demonstrates that despite the face that women constitute the vast majority of those who do the day to day work of inclusion, their contributions go unnoticed and are invisible. Through in-depth interviews and participant observation, the author examines women's caregiving and relationship building in the areas of family as mothers of children with disabilities, in the human service system as paid workers, and in the context of friendships. Crucial to this study is the idea that caring is not a personality trait inherent in being a woman, rather it is created through social interactions. Women are recruited for caregiving through powerful social arrangements and this social construction of women as caregivers continues throughout their lives.

The analysis outlines the multiple ways women's work is made invisible, and that the field of disability studies does nothing to make this work visible. In fact, often exploits women by not recognizing and understanding the work that they do. The author concludes by articulating areas for change in the fields of feminist scholarship and disability policy.

TITLE: The meaning of care in the lives of mothers of children with disabilities

AUTHOR: Traustadottir, R.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1991

In S. J. Taylor, R. Bogdan, and J. A. Racino (Eds.), Life in the community: Case studies of organizations supporting people with disabilities (pp. 185-194). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 10624
Baltimore, MD 21285-0624

In this qualitative chapter, Traustadottir explores the gender differences in caring for a child with a disability within the family. She discovered that the responsibility for caring is based on gender. The study revealed the term 'caring' as a complex phenomenon that has at least three meanings. Caring for: the work, means acquiring specialized knowledge and techniques which are associated with professional work (not traditional mothering work). The second definition is caring about: the love. This refers to relationships and emotions. The third definition is the extended caring role. The meaning of care extends from a woman's own child to broader community or societal concerns surrounding people with disabilities and the way they are treated in society.

The author also discusses gender roles and the responsibility or caring. The women are usually responsible. This begins when she decides to keep her child at home rather than a residential setting. This is almost always the mother's decision because it is understood that she will be the primary care giver. In addition to this work, she is responsible for the housework and other family work. Furthermore, the baby is not seen as a restriction on family life if it only restricts the mother. However, if the family feels restricted then the situation is considered problematic. Some women see the job of caring as their 'natural' responsibility, while others resist this traditional gender role.

The author concludes by stating that disability studies needs to look at gender as a critical issue and needs to examine issues of gender and the roles of mothers and fathers in families.

TITLE: Mothers who care: Gender, disability, and family life

AUTHOR: Traustadottir, R.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1991

Journal of Family Issues, 12(2), 211-228.

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore the role of gender in families which have children with disabilities. The author seeks to fill a gap in the literature on family supports and disability, which frequently ignores the gendered nature of caring and women's unpaid work within the family. Based on interviews, the author attempts to understand caring from the carer's perspectives, and examines the meanings and activities entailed in caring and how caring for a child with a disability influences the life of their primary caregiver. She also explores how gender influences the caring for a child with a disability, the extent to which mothers of children with disabilities see their caring role and experiences as oppressing and/or empowering, and how they negotiate their caring role within the family with outside careers. She finds that families of children with disabilities tend to follow the most traditional family patterns, with the husband as breadwinner and the wife as caretaker.

The author attributes this tendency to larger economic structures which pay women less for their work. Given this, when traditional caring becomes necessary such as when a child with a disability is born into the family, families are given little choice as to who has to quit their jobs because wage discrimination still renders women's pay less than men's pay.

TITLE: Contradictions in caring

AUTHOR: Walmsley, J.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1993

Disability, Handicap & Society, 8(2), 129-141.

Walmsley uses research about the experiences of women with learning difficulties and shows how they, like non disabled women, often find themselves in caring roles, and they too find this role both sustaining and frustrating. She argues that to attempt to divide the experiences of the 'carer' and the 'dependent' is virtually impossible because the relationships are both reciprocal and interdependent. The author argues for a new understanding of the caring relationship in that the carer and the cared for be considered together, not in opposition to one another.

TITLE: The caring wife: The experience of caring for a severely disabled husband in the community

AUTHOR: Whalley Hammell, K. R.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1992

Disability, Handicap & Society, 7(4), 349-362.

This article explores the experiences of wives who assume a caring role following the onset of a husband's severe disability. Given the fact that modern medicine has increased the chances of survival of a major injury, these disabled people are returning to their communities and needing care. The author examines the social expectations of women's role in the provision of care for people with severe disabilities. The author argues that community care actually means care by women, and she looks at who care for people with disabilities in the community, why these women care, the impact of caring on these women, how to support carers (what their needs are) and some implications of community care policies.

TITLE: Mothers of children with disabilities and the construction of experience

AUTHOR: Wickham-Searl, P.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1994

Research in the Sociology of Health Care, 11, 175-187.

In this qualitative study, the author seeks to understand and describe the meaning of expertise in the lives of mothers of children with disabilities who extend their caring role from inside the family to social activism in disability related work outside of the family. The author bases her research in feminist theories concerned with the nature of women's work, the value of personal experience, and the importance of conversations between women. The author found that these women developed confidence in their caring work within their own families and gradually began to work on behalf of others with disabilities. These women regarded themselves as experts both at home and in the community, and attributed this to their home work, their interactions with professionals, and their work in the field of disability in general.

TITLE: Careers in caring: Mothers of children with disabilities

AUTHOR: Wickham-Searl, P.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1992

Disability, Handicap, and Society, 7(1), 5-18.

The author studied the experiences of 14 women who were mothers of children with disabilities. These women had extended their family caregiving roles to public work in the disability field in order to help other families. Their work often stemmed from a lack of available services and programs for their own children and their insights here led them to help other parents. Several themes developed during these interviews. Among them are the reliance on personal experience for guidance in the caregiving and public work process, the importance of their mothering role and their children, the realization that people with disabilities and their caregivers are not valued in society, and the search for legitimation for their work.

MOTHERHOOD AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

This section lists writings on two different but related topics: motherhood and reproductive rights. Most of the writings on reproductive rights present different viewpoints and arguments around the moral dilemmas between disability rights and women's rights. The issue of motherhood is also addressed from a range of perspectives, including the experiences of motherhood written by women with disabilities, and the perspectives of professionals and service providers who come in contact with families where the mother has mental retardation. Some of these pieces also address common misconceptions about motherhood and disability.

TITLE: The Lois Anderson Story
To choose a child
Parenting

AUTHOR: Anderson, L.
Hyler, D.11
LeMaistre, J.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1985

In S. E. Browne, D. Connors, & N. Stern (Eds.), With the power of each breath: A disabled women's anthology.

Cleis Press, A Women's Publishing Company
P.O. Box 8933
Pittsburgh, PA 15221

All three chapters are written by women with disabilities where they describe their experiences of motherhood.

TITLE: Real moral dilemmas

AUTHOR: Asch, A.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1986

Christianity and Crisis, 46(10), 237-240.

This issue of Christianity and Crisis is a special issue on abortion. In her article, Adrienne Asch reviews the feminist case for women's right to reproductive choice and concludes that she supports the feminist case for legal abortion. But she seriously questions the wisdom of selective abortions of fetuses of the 'wrong sex' or fetuses that have been diagnosed as having a disability, such as Down Syndrome or spina bifida. Asch's arguments against selected abortions are based on the view that support for women's equality with men should not be obtained by subverting other people's equality or potentiality, i.e., people with disabilities or people of a certain sex. This is a very thoughtful article which devotes much of its attention to the moral dilemma between disability rights and women's rights.

TITLE: Uncertain futures

AUTHOR: Asch, A.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1986

Women's Review of Books, IV(2), 16.

This article is a review of the book The tentative pregnancy: Prenatal diagnosis and the future of motherhood by Barbara Katz Rothman. Throughout the review and discussion of Rothman's book Asch addresses, from a disability as well as a feminist perspective, some of the most troubling questions which follow when technology can tell us so much about the gender and health status of the fetus. The article also highlights the difficulties and anxieties prenatal screening brings to the lives of women, and the pressure they are under to abort 'defective' fetuses. Asch's article concludes with a call for more compassion for the women involved and a 'conviction of the worth of all children, disabled or not.'

Rothman's book is annotated later in this section.

TITLE: Shared dreams: A left perspective on disability rights and reproductive rights

AUTHOR: Asch, A., & Fine, M.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1988

In M. Fine & A. Asch (Eds.), Women with disabilities: Essays in psychology, culture, and politics (pp. 245-268).

Temple University Press
Broad and Oxford Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19122

This article addresses women's right to abortion and the right of newborns with disabilities to medical treatment. Both sets of rights, which are currently under severe attack, have frequently been juxtaposed as a contradiction. The authors argue that although women's right to abortion and the right of newborns with disabilities to medical treatment are separate rights, they are compatible and it is essential to protect both sets of rights.

TITLE: On the question of Baby Doe

AUTHOR: Asch, A.,& Rothman, B. K.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1986

Health/PAC Bulletin, 16(6), 6-13.

This issue of Health/PAC Bulletin features two articles with the same name: 'On the question of Baby Doe,' where two authors, Adrienne Asch and Barbara Katz Rothman, address the rights of newborns with disabilities to medical treatment. The articles grew out of a public forum on reproductive rights and disability rights, sponsored by Health/PAC. The forum was brought about by an interest in the Baby Doe cases which seem to challenge the very core of the feminist movement, that is, the right of women to control their reproductive functions and to guide the fate of their offspring. Although Asch and Rothman are both dedicated feminists, they have a fundamental disagreement on the treatment issues and present their arguments in distinctly different terms. A very interesting reading for anyone who is interested in these issues.

TITLE: Erasing mothers with disabilities through Canadian family related policy

AUTHOR: Blackford, K. A.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1993

Disability, Handicap & Society, 8(3), 281-294.

Blackford explores family policy in Canada as it pertains to mothers with disabilities. She argues that Canadian public policy claims to empower disadvantaged groups, and while women with disabilities who are mothers fit into this group, the author shows that they are still, in fact, discriminated against. The author demonstrates through federal, provincial, and municipal government policies that inadequate accommodation for women with disabilities denies them the rights and entitlements due to all Canadian citizens.

TITLE: The politics of prenatal testing and selective abortion

AUTHOR: Blumberg, L.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1994

Sexuality and Disability, 12(2), 135-153.

Blumberg addresses issues regarding the decision of women to have a child with a disability. She discusses the current trend toward prenatal testing and suggestions by doctors to about fetuses with disabilities. The author asserts that a key issue in the expectation that fetuses with disabilities should be aborted is societal attitudes toward women with disabilities and disability in general.

TITLE: Parameters of successful and unsuccessful interventions with parents who are mentally retarded

AUTHOR: Budd, K. S., & Greenspan, S.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1985

Mental Retardation, 23(6), 269-273.

This article examines interventions with parents who have mental retardation. The authors conducted a review of published and unpublished documents to determine the scope and outcome of such interventions. In addition, they report briefly on a survey they conducted of therapists' experiences in providing training to caregivers with mental retardation. The survey results indicate that parent training programs for parents who have mental retardation tend to be more elaborate, more directive, and longer than the typical programs for parents without disabilities. The survey also indicates that about half of the families made substantial improvement on referral problems, but in only one-third of the cases were the therapists optimistic about the family's ability to function adequately without extensive continued assistance. Another interesting finding was that when the therapists determined whether parents were adequate caregivers they focused on the parents' behavior, not their intelligence, and cognitive limitation was rarely mentioned as a reason to question parental custody of children. The authors conclude with a call for more research on how to help parents with mental retardation to function effectively as parents.

The survey was conducted with families where the mother had been identified as having mental retardation, but like most of the literature on 'parents,' the authors of this article use the term 'parents' and thereby hide the fact that they are primarily referring to mothers.

TITLE: The baby challenge: A handbook on pregnancy for women with a physical disability

AUTHOR: Campion, M. J.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: in press

Routledge, Chapman and Hall
29 West 35th Street
New York, NY 10001-2291

This is an informative resource that suggests practical ways for women with physical disabilities to best prepare themselves for pregnancy and motherhood. Also included are personal accounts from mothers with disabilities as well as a detailed source list for further health care information.

TITLE: Reproductive laws for the 1990s

AUTHOR: Cohen, S., & Taub, N. (Eds.)

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1989

Humana Press
Crescent Manor
P.O. Box 2148
Clifton, NJ 07015

This book is a good resource for a detailed discussion of emerging issues in reproductive technology. The book has a chapter by Adrienne Asch, 'Reproductive technologies and disability,' addressing how these emerging issues affect people with disabilities.

TITLE: System thwarts disabled moms
Disabled mom loses kids
Disabled not different

AUTHOR: Corbett, K

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1989

All three articles are in New Directions for Women, September/October 1989, 4-5.

These three articles by Katherine Corbett tell the stories of mothers who have disabilities and their struggles to become mothers, as well as their struggles to keep their children after having become mothers. The mothers in these articles have a range of disabilities, some are deaf, some are blind, and some have physical disabilities. None of the mothers has mental retardation. The mothers also have a diverse racial and economic background. One of the women tells how she was, at the age of 21, convinced by her doctor to be sterilized. And the story 'Disabled mom loses kids,' describes how a mother with a physical disability lost custody over her two sons because the Department of Social Services did not believe she could handle the task of mothering, and because there was not funding to assist her. The articles also have more positive examples of mothers and couples with disabilities. For example, a story of a deaf, black, single mother of three children, and a story of a lesbian couple with physical disabilities who are successfully raising their seven year old son.

TITLE: Women with disabilities: Abortion and liberation

AUTHOR: Davis, A.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1987

Disability, Handicap & Society, 2(3), 276-284

In this article Alison Davis argues that the women's movement, which ideally should provide the perfect vehicle for women with disabilities to fight for and protect their rights, has failed to take this group of women into account. The author further argues that by supporting abortion on the grounds of a disability, the women's movement has, in fact, denied women with disabilities an identity as equal human beings, worthy of respect and has called into question the fundamental societal rights of people with disabilities. Davis, who has spina bifida, describes how she changed her mind about abortion, from supporting abortion to being against it. Instead of seeing reproductive rights and disability rights as compatible, she argues that these are incongruous. She also argues that abortion is far from being a right, instead abortion underlines women's oppression and is counter-productive to women in general, and to women with disabilities in particular. This article takes a different perspective than most other available writing on these issues and should therefore be of interest to those who would like to review different arguments around the issues of reproductive rights and disability rights.

TITLE: The question of disability: No easy answers for the women's movement

AUTHOR: Fine, M., & Asch, A.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1982

The Reproductive Rights Newsletter, 4(3), 19-20.

The intent of this article is to provide a feminist vision of reproductive rights and disability rights, and grows out of the authors outrage at the extent to which the reproductive rights movement has exploited disability toward its own ends. The authors describe how the disability movement and the reproductive rights movement share a tradition of a commitment to women's control over their bodies and access to resources to live full, sexual and meaningful lives. The authors argue that because the struggles of these two movements are intertwined, one battle cannot be won without the other, and feminists must stop exploiting disability issues for the aims of reproductive rights.

TITLE: Claiming all of our bodies: Reproductive rights and disability

AUTHOR: Finger, A.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1985

In S. E. Brown, D. Connors, & N. Stern (Eds.), With the power of each breath: A disabled women's anthology (pp. 292-307).

Cleis Press, A Women's Publishing Company
P.O. Box 8933
Pittsburgh, PA 15221

In this article Anne Finger raises a number of major criticisms of the reproductive rights movement. Her major criticism are: (1) the reproductive rights movement has by and large ignored the reproductive rights of women with disabilities; (2) it has not been physically accessible to women with disabilities; (3) it has ignored the forced sterilization of people with disabilities and failed to address the denial of reproductive rights to men and women with disabilities; and (4) many activists within the movement have used the issues raised by disabled fetuses in ways that are highly exploitative and prey upon fears of disability.

Finger addresses all of these criticisms in a very thoughtful manner as well as discussing issues raised by fetal diagnosis and the killings of newborns with disabilities. She also addresses issues of sexuality, birth control and parental rights of people with disabilities. Although Finger's major criticism is directed toward the reproductive rights movement she also criticizes the disability rights movement for ignoring the rights of women with disabilities.

TITLE: An introduction to menstrual management for women who have an intellectual disability and high support needs

AUTHOR: Griffen, J. et al.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1994

International Journal of Disability, Development, and Education, 41(2), 103-116.

This article describes a research project focusing on the management of menstruation for women who have labels of severe or profound mental retardation. The authors state the importance of acceptance of menstruation and explore the possibility of the women with the disabilities partially participating in their own menstrual care. Also included in the article are key factors to consider in developing skill development activities such as attitudes of care providers, and an illustrative case study.

TITLE: Reproductive issues for persons with physical disabilities

AUTHOR: Haseltine, F. P., Cole, S. S., & Gray, D. B. (Eds.)

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1993

Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co. Inc.
P.O. Box 10624
Baltimore, MD 21285-0624

This book challenges the social stereotypes about reproduction and disabilities and presents the fact that people with disabilities do have sexual needs and desires. The chapters in this book explore the reproductive issues associated with congenital and acquired disabilities, and include such topics as fertility, health care needs, contraception, adoption, genetic counseling, pregnancy, parenting, sexually transmitted diseases, sexual dysfunction, and reproductive physiology. Contributing authors include researchers, people with disabilities, academics, medical professionals, and psychologists.

The book is an interesting blend of academic articles and personal stories. For example, a rather clinical article about how a woman with a disability may experience pregnancy, labor, and delivery, is preceded by a personal account of a woman with a physical disability sharing her experiences of pregnancy and childbirth. By weaving these two styles together in this way, the book becomes more than a clinical guide to reproduction and sexuality, rather it becomes a book for people with disabilities to share their experiences in these areas, which is a much needed addition to the literature on sexuality and disability.

TITLE: Women with disabilities having children: It's our right too

AUTHOR: Killoran, C.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1994

Sexuality and Disability, 12(2), 121-126.

This article is a first person account of the experiences of a woman with multiple sclerosis who chose to have a child. Killoran discusses the difficulties she encountered when dealing with the medial establishment, with fertility services, and with society's responses to her pregnancy and motherhood. She also discusses her experiences during pregnancy and motherhood. Also included in this article is a comparison of her experiences with the experiences of women who do not have disabilities.

TITLE: Mothers with disabilities

AUTHOR: Kocher, M.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1994

Sexuality and Disability, 12(2), 127-133.

This article is a collection of experiences regarding motherhood expressed by six women who have physical disabilities. Topics covered include the difficulties imposed by the disability and the challenges of motherhood. These women's experiences challenge the notion that good mothers must be physically active with her children and instead focuses on the personal relationships between mother and child as the important part of parenting. The author also highlights the necessity and value of a support system (peer supports) in order to network with people in similar situations.

TITLE: A guide to pregnancy, labor, and delivery for women with disabilities

AUTHOR: Rogers, J. G.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1993

In F. P. Haseltine, S. S. Cole, & D. B. Gray, Reproductive issues for persons with physical disabilities. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co, Inc.

Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 10624
Baltimore, MD 21285-0624

This chapter was adapted from "The Mother to Be: A Guide to Pregnancy and Birth for Women with Disabilities." It discusses a few of the problems that affect numerous pregnant women who have disabilities. The information is based on interviews with 36 women with a variety of disabilities. Among the findings is that the severity of disability, not necessarily the type of disability can predict how difficult a pregnancy will be. After a brief discussion about negative attitudes many disabled women face when they are pregnant, the authors describe and discuss pregnancy discomforts which many women with disabilities experience. She also discusses how to accommodate women in terms of office procedures, and she also provides a lengthy discussion of the experiences of labor reported by the women interviewed for this study. Following labor, Rogers gives information regarding delivery, cesarean section, postpartum recovery, and child care issues.

TITLE: Brenda Clark

AUTHOR: Roth, W.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1981

In W. Roth (Ed.), The handicapped speak out (pp. 124-134).

McFarland & Company
Box 611
Jefferson, NC 28640

In this chapter Brenda Clark talks about her experiences of being a black woman and a single mother with a physical disability. Brenda devotes a large part of the chapter to describing the joy of motherhood, and how she manages to take care of her daughter, despite the fact that she has little use of her arms.

TITLE: The tentative pregnancy: Prenatal diagnoses and the future of motherhood

AUTHOR: Rothman, B. K.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1986

Viking Penguin
40 West 23rd Street
New York, NY 10010

The new technology that makes prenatal screening and diagnosis possible is usually celebrated by the medical establishment as a triumph for modern medicine as means to prevent disability. This technology is also seen as a way to improve the lives of families and societies. This book deals with this new technology but goes beyond the technology itself and looks at how it affects the lives of women who use it. This is a study of 120 women who have used amniocentesis, the most used form of prenatal testing. All the women in this study who received 'bad diagnoses' (that is the fetus was diagnosed as having some form of a disability) made the decision to have an abortion. Rothman describes with great sympathy the pressure on women to use the technology and to undergo abortion if the fetus is 'defective.' Rothman sees these women as victims of technology, sacrificing themselves to spare their children from suffering.

The subject of this book is at the center of one of the dilemmas faced by feminists with disabilities, that is, feminists with disabilities who have participated in the fight for women's rights to control their own bodies, who are now faced with the fact that this right is used to selectively abort 'defective' fetuses.

TITLE: Prenatal screening and discriminatory attitudes about disability

AUTHOR: Saxton, M.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1987

GeneWATCH, January-February 1987, 8-10.

This article, written by Marsha Saxton, criticizes the current trend of prenatal screening and abortion of fetuses identified as disabled, and challenges the assumptions which underlie these practices. Saxton speaks as a feminist who supports pro-choice, as well as a person with spina bifida, the disability that is one of the major targets of prenatal screening. Among other things, she explores how the oppressive attitudes against disability dominate the counseling to pregnant women and challenges the assumption that the world would be a better place without people born with disabilities.

Page 7 of this same issue has a short description of some of the new technologies of prenatal testing and a list of resources and organizations on women's health, reproductive technologies, and prenatal screening.

TITLE: Like other women: Perspectives of mothers with physical disabilities

AUTHORS: Shaul, S., Dowling, P. J., & Laden, B. F.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1985

In M. J. Deegan & N. A. Brooks (Eds.), Women and disability: The double handicap (pp. 133-42).

Transaction Books
Rutgers University
New Brunswick, NJ 08903

This chapter is based on interviews with ten mothers who have physical disabilities and discusses pre-pregnancy considerations; pregnancy, labor and delivery; the physical caring for a young child; and discipline of children. The authors address some of the common misconceptions about motherhood and disability and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of being a mother with a disability.

TITLE: Child maltreatment and mentally retarded parents: Is there a relationship?

AUTHOR: Shilling, R. F., Schinke, S. P., Blythe, B. J., & Bart, R. P.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1982

Mental Retardation, 20(5), 201-209

This paper reviews the literature to examine if there is a relationship between maltreatment of children and the level of intelligence of their parents. The authors review literature in three areas: child protection studies, mental retardation literature, and clinical data. Most of the literature reviewed only indirectly addresses the question of maltreatment of children by their parents with mental retardation. The studies that address this issue directly tend to be methodologically flawed and present unverified allegations of neglect and abuse. Other studies have found women with mental retardation to be capable mothers. The authors conclude that although there is an indication that children of parents with mental retardation are at greater risk for maltreatment, diminished intellectual capacity alone does not prove parental incompetence.

The authors call for more research in this area. The authors most often refer to 'parents' with mental retardation, thereby hiding the fact that much of the literature they reviewed is on mothers with mental retardation.

TITLE: My body is new to me again

AUTHOR: Talshir, D.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1985

In A. J. Brightman (Ed.), Ordinary moments: The disabled experience (pp. 67-178).

Human Policy Press
P.O. Box 127, University Station
Syracuse, NY 13210

This chapter is written by Debbi Talshir, a musician and a nurse, who acquired MS at the age of 25. The chapter contains descriptions of her experiences of becoming disabled and living with the disability. She devotes a part of the chapter to talk about how she manages motherhood as a woman with a disability.

TITLE: The legal trends: Implications for menstruation/fertility management for young women who have an intellectual impairment

AUTHOR: Taylor, M., & Carlson, G.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1993

International Journal of Disability, Development, and Education, 40(2), 133-158.

This article reviews the Family Court of Australia cases concerning the hysterectomies performed on premenarchal women who have intellectual disabilities. The article discusses the implications of these surgeries on women who have an intellectual disability, and while the article is based on Australian cases, much can be applied to women in other countries.

TITLE: Up against eugenics: Disabled women's challenge to receive reproductive health services

AUTHOR: Waxman, B. F.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1994

Sexuality and Disability, 12, 155-171.

This article is an overview of the health status of disabled women. The author focuses on the politics of eugenics as the explanatory factor in why disabled women are devalued as reproductive beings, why they have little access to women's health services, and why they are faced with contraceptive choices which may pose a threat to their reproductive health and freedom (ie: Depo Provera). Waxman poses research questions which would be of benefit to women with disabilities as well as promote reproductive rights and the disabled feminist movement.

TITLE: The adoptive process: Challenges and opportunities for people with disabilities

AUTHOR: White, G. W., & White, N. L.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1993

In F .P. Haseltine, S .S. Cole, & D .B. Gray, Reproductive issues for persons with physical disabilities. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 10624
Baltimore, MD 21285-0624

This article addresses the barriers people with disabilities face when they seek to adopt a child. The authors discuss why people with disabilities choose to adopt and the typical channels used for adoption. White and White describe different types of adoptions and the fact that people with disabilities need to consider that not all adoption agencies may be right for their particular situation. They may want to be alert for patronizing behavior, to find accessible agencies, and to note if the agency is willing to accommodate them.

TITLE: When a parent is mentally retarded

AUTHOR: Whitman, B. Y., & Accardo, P. J. (Eds.)

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1990

Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company, Inc.
P.O. Box 10624
Baltimore, MD 21285-0624

People with mental retardation who live in the community are marring and having children. The book is, at least partly, an attempt to answer the question: How can we solve the right of people who have mental retardation to have and raise children, and the rights of these children to have their basic needs met? The book addresses a wide range of issues. The first section is devoted to an epidemiological perspective and describes the editors study of parents who have mental retardation. They found, among other things, a serious lack of support services for these parents and that 25% of their children had been removed from their care. They also claim that these parents and their children are 'hidden and at high risk.' Another chapter in this first section takes a medical perspective and looks at genetics and mental retardation. The section on educational interventions describes the experiences of two programs which provide training for parents with mental retardation. The section on legality and ethics reviews the rights of adults with mental retardation to marry and have children, as well as the potential conflict of those rights with children's rights to adequate parenting.

This book contains a significant amount of useful information but it is a bit confusing that the contributors to this volume do not agree with each other on fundamental issues. Even the editors report that they disagree on issues such as sterilization of people with mental retardation and the rights of persons with mental retardation to marry.

The book is written from a service providers point of view and presents the 'problem' as it is seen by those who provide services to parents with mental retardation. The book does not give insights into the lives of the parents or present their point of view. We do not learn what they think is important or what kind of support they identify as being important.

Finally, a note about language use. 'Parenting,' in most cases, really means 'mothering,' because child rearing is seen as being the primary responsibility of women. This book talks about parenting and does not mention the fact that problems with child rearing and interventions into family life to 'correct' the problems or 'support' the family, usually impacts the life of the mother to a much greater extent than it does the father's life. The book does not address how the interventions outlined, could influence the lives of women who have mental retardation and are struggling with motherhood.

FURTHER RESOURCES:
Motherhood and Reproductive Rights

This child is mine
A video about mothers with developmental disabilities

University of California
Extension Media Center
2176 Shattuck Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94704
(415) 642-5578 (Purchase)
(415) 642-0460 (Rent or Preview)

This video is 29 minutes long and focuses on four mothers with mild disabilities. The video is available for purchase, rental, and preview before purchase.

SEXUALITY

The sexuality of women with disabilities is an area that has received a considerable amount of attention. While much of the writing in this area reflects the struggle of women with disabilities to be seen as sexual beings, listed below are also writings about sex-education, sex-therapies, and the specific problems women with mental retardation have faced in terms of their sexuality.

TITLE: New sex therapies: Policy and practice

AUTHOR: Cammaert, L. P.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1984

In L. E. Walker (Ed.), Women and mental health policy (pp. 247-266).

Sage Publications
P.O. Box 5084
Newbury Park, CA 91359

This chapter addresses issues of female sexuality and describes the dramatic changes in attitudes and norms around female sexuality and sexual behavior which have occurred during this century. The author reviews the literature on female sexuality, female 'sexual dysfunctioning,' and effectiveness of sex therapy for women. Although researchers and sex therapists have begun to accept that women's sexual needs and desires are just as important as men's, there is still a danger for inappropriate treatment, based on stereotypical and outdated ideas of women's sexuality. The author therefore advises women, who seek sex therapy, to be careful when they select a sex therapist. The chapter concludes with a call for more research on female sexuality and claims that the little that is known is mostly based on samples of white, well-educated, middle-class, heterosexual American women. Our understanding of female sexuality must be based on the experiences of all women: women of color, single women, lesbian women, poor women, celibate women, and women with a variety of educational levels, as well as women of all ages.

TITLE: Responding to the sexuality of people with mental handicap

AUTHOR: Coley, L. & Marler, R.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1987

In G. Horobin (Ed.), Sex, gender and care work (pp. 66-81).

St. Martin's Press
175 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10010

This chapter states that the sexuality of people with mental handicap has been largely ignored and in the few instances where it has been considered, the response has been restrictive and over-protective. (The book is British and uses the word mental handicap for mental retardation). The authors trace some of the restrictive attitudes to the way human services are operated. For example, many group homes are run by Christian groups who insist that residents live up to what is see as 'Christian principles of high morals and values.'

The authors state clearly that people with mental retardation have the same rights and needs to enjoy their sexuality as anyone else, and should have the same right to marry or cohabit as anyone else.

Although the chapter does not direct much attention to issues of specific concern to women with disabilities it raises issues of great concern to them, such as forced sterilization and forced abortion.

TITLE: Who cares? A handbook on sex education and counselling services for disabled people

AUTHOR: Cornelius, D. A., Chipouras, S., Makas, E., & Daniels, S. M.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1982

Baltimore: University Park Press.

Based on a survey of 97 individuals with disabilities, the authors examine the myths that are created when we have a combination of disability and sexuality, and how both individuals and agencies react to the sexuality of people with disabilities. The authors state that, when we evaluate the responses of people and organizations, it is important that we differentiate between attitudes toward sexuality in general, attitudes toward disability in general, and attitudes toward disability and sexuality. The survey shows a discrepancy between the expressed need for services and what is actually available. Rather than creating special disability oriented services, the authors recommend the use of generic community based services.

TITLE: Sexuality, schooling, and adolescent females: The missing discourse of desire

AUTHOR: Fine, M.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1988

Harvard Educational Review, 58(1), 29-53.

This article examines diverse perspectives on adolescent sexuality as well as current sex-education practices. The article is based on a thorough review of the literature, as well as the author's research on sex-education in public schools, and is informed by a study of numerous current sex-education curricula. The author identifies the three prevalent discourses of female sexuality inside public schools as being, (1) sexuality as violence, (2) sexuality as victimization, and (3) sexuality as individual morality. As a result, young women are educated primarily as the potential victim of male sexuality, they are not seen as sexual agents, and young women continue to be taught to fear and defend in isolation from exploring desires. The naming of desire, pleasure, or sexual entitlement, particularly for females, barely exists in the formal agenda of public schooling on sexuality. As an alternative to the prevailing discourses of female sexuality, the author presents a case for the discourse of desire, which would acknowledge female sexual desire and pleasure. Although this article does not mention women with disabilities it is very informing for anyone interested in female sexuality and sex-education, and provides an excellent framework to think about female sexuality and sex-education for all women, including women with disabilities.

TITLE: Lesbians with disabilities

AUTHOR: O'Toole, C. J., & Bregante, J. L.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1992

Sexuality and Disability, 10(3), 163-172.

The authors argue that while there is a severe absence in the literature regarding women with disabilities and sexuality, there is virtually nothing in this literature regarding lesbians and disability. This article addresses the issues surrounding being lesbian and disabled and also looks at the unique problems of the partners of these women. The authors also address the negative attitudes of health care workers toward both disability and homosexuality.

TITLE: The something that happened before I was born

AUTHOR: Saxton, M.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1985

In A. J. Brightman (Ed.), Ordinary moments: The disabled experience (pp. 127-140).

Human Policy Press
P.O. Box 127
University Station
Syracuse, NY 13210

In this chapter the author talks about her experiences of being female and having a physical disability. Among the things she discusses candidly is her sexuality.

FURTHER RESOURCES:
Sexuality

Disability Studies Quarterly
Summer 1989, 9(3)

Suffolk University
Sawyer School of Management
Department of Public Management
Eight Ashburton Place
Boston, MA 02108-2770

This issue focuses on 'The politics of sex and disability,' and contains a wealth of information and resources.

Sexuality and Disability

Human Sciences Press, 5th Floor
233 Spring Street,
New York, NY 10013

This journal is a good source of information about issues of sexuality and sexual abuse. The journal was published regularly for a number of years, but has been published irregularly since 1987.

Coalition on Sexuality and Disability

122 East 23rd Street
New York, NY 10010

This coalition is a network of people with and without disabilities committed to advancing the full social integration of people with disabilities. The coalition wants to increase the availability of accessible, client-responsive sexual health information and services. Members of the coalition act as educators and advocates for the right of people with disabilities to a full social and sexual life. The coalition publishes a newsletter focusing on current issues and developments in the area of sexuality and disability, including a listing of publications, conferences and other events that may be of interest to its members.

SIECUS
The Sex Information and Educational Council of the U.S.

New York University
32 Washington Place
New York, NY 10003
(212) 673-3850

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

This is an educational organization established in 1964 to promote healthy sexuality as an integral part of human life. It publishes bibliographies of current materials and resources in over 80 specific categories. Two of these bibliographies focus on disability and sexuality: 'Sexuality and disability,' published in March 1986 (6 pages nearly 100 items), and Nov-Dec 1988 'Sexuality and the developmentally disabled' (3 pages 25 items). These bibliographies list books, curricula materials, teaching aids, audiovisual material, organizations, and information about databases. SIECUS has information and library services where people can requests information on specific topics.

Let's Talk About Health: What Every Woman Should Know

Women's Health Project at The Arc of New Jersey
985 Livingston Avenue
North Brunswick, NJ 08902
Phone: (908) 246-2525

The Arc of New Jersey is sponsoring a number of educational kits for women with mental disabilities. Let's Talk About Health is designed to help women with disabilities take control of their health. Topics covered include gynecological exams, check-ups, and menopause. Each kit includes a video (with explicit detail), work-book, and audiocassette. The cost of each kit is $28 and the materials can be ordered separately.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse of women and children with disabilities is another area that has received an increasing amount of attention. Much of this literature is based on studies that show that women with disabilities are at a much greater risk of being sexually abused than other women. This is true in society in general, and within residential facilities in particular. The literature listed below reflects these studies, as well as writings that have attempted to explain the increased vulnerability of women and children with disability to sexual abuse, and suggestions about what preventive measures can be taken.

The author would like to thank Missy Morton for her help in preparing this section.

TITLE: The courage to heal: A guide for women survivors of child sexual abuse

AUTHOR: Bass, E., & Davis, L.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1988

Harper & Row
10 E. 53rd Street
New York, NY 10022

This book is written for women who have been sexually abused as children and is one of the most comprehensive book on this subject. This is a very powerful book which is written by and for women survivors of child sexual abuse. It contains these women's stories of the abuse and the healing process and talks about the damage experienced by secrecy and silence. The book is in accessible and readable language and gives practical advice about the healing process, both for those who have been abused and their friends and lovers. The book does not focus on women with disabilities specifically but it includes them as a part of the main text. Although addresses and resources are included throughout the book the last part of the book lists a wide range of resources and advice that can be of value in the healing process as well as an annotated bibliography of readings on a variety of topics related to child sexual abuse. The bibliography includes readings about women with disabilities.

TITLE: Sexual intimacy between psychotherapists and clients: Policy implications for the future

AUTHOR: Bouhoutsos, J. C.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1984

In L. E. Walker (Ed.), Women and mental health policy (pp. 197-206).

Sage Publications
P.O. Box 5084
Newbury Park, CA 91359

The author traces the problem of sexual intimacy between healers and their patients back to antiquity and gives a brief historical overview of attitudes towards such sexual activities. She reviews the research literature on therapist-client sexual involvement and finds, among other things, that the overwhelming majority of reported incidents occurs between male therapists and female clients, and that such sexual involvement with therapists has been shown to be harmful to client. The author goes on to state that complaints are very rarely filed and lists various reasons why female clients do not take actions to file complaints. She reviews clients' possibilities in filing complaints and lists the advantages and disadvantages of different courses of action. The chapter concludes by suggesting that prevention is the best solution, but prevention requires policy changes in many areas of the mental health system.

TITLE: Facing the challenges of sexual abuse in persons with disabilities

AUTHOR: Cole, S. S.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1984

Sexuality and Disability, 7(3/4), 71-88.

This article addresses causes, myths, and prevention of sexual abuse of people with disabilities. The author represents the view that sexual abuse has more to do with oppressive use of power than it has to do with sex. This leads her to examine the links between power structures, oppression and abuse, as well as the links between various forms of oppression. She states that it is essential to identify and change societal beliefs and norms which permit sexual abuse and exploitation to continue. The power structures in our society provide males with more power than females, able-bodied persons with more power than people with disabilities, and so on. This makes the less powerful, such as women, children, and people with disabilities likely candidates for sexual abuse. The author also draws parallels between incest within the family and sexual abuse of people living in residential facilities. Among the parallels are: (1) the abuser is usually someone the victim is physically or emotionally dependent on; (2) the perpetrators are frequently respected members of their communities; and (3) the victim can have confusing and conflicting feelings of love and hate towards the perpetrator. Among preventive measures the author recommends are increased public awareness of how common sexual abuse is, assisting parents and staff to feel comfortable about all aspects of sexuality, identifying societal norms that contribute to abuse, and training and education for parents, caregivers, professionals, and individuals with disabilities.

TITLE: Prevalence of a history of sexual abuse among female psychiatric patients in a state hospital system

AUTHOR: Craine, L. S., Henson, C. E., Colliver, J. A., & MacLelan, D. G.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1988

Hospital and Community Psychiatry, 39(3), 300-304.

This is a study of the history of sexual abuse among women living in state psychiatric hospitals. A sample 105 women was randomly selected from 11 state hospitals serving mentally ill persons in Illinois. The women ranged in age from 13 to 81 and were of diverse racial and cultural backgrounds. The authors found that 51% of these 105 women had been sexually abused as children or adolescents, and that in the majority of cases hospital staff were unaware that these women had histories of sexual abuse. Only 20% of the 105 women believed they had been adequately treated for sexual abuse. The women who reported a history of sexual abuse were significantly more likely to have a range of symptoms commonly linked with sexual abuse. Despite this, 56% of the abused women had never been identified as victims of sexual abuse and were not being treated for the abuse. A recent study of the prevalence of sexual abuse in the general population reported that 16% of women reported incestuous abuse and 38% reported extrafamilia abuse, before the age of 18. The authors conclude that their study suggests that the prevalence of sexual abuse is much higher among women who become inpatients of psychiatric hospitals than among the general population, and call for increased awareness of sexual abuse from hospital staff and a more accurate diagnose, which would result in appropriate treatment of women who have histories of sexual abuse.

TITLE: Sexual assault of handicapped individuals

AUTHOR: Longo, R. E., & Gochenour, C.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1981

Journal of Rehabilitation, 47, 24-27.

Based on their work with sex offenders the authors report that rape and child sexual assault are not related to sex but to issues of control and power. Abusers will look for and use vulnerability to create the opportunity to rape. This vulnerability is increased in people who are marginalized, dependent and in need of affection. The authors describe ways to support victims of sexual assault and emphasize that support is equally important for people with disabilities as it is for anyone else.

TITLE: Patterns of institutional sexual assault

AUTHOR: Musick, J. L.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1984

Response to Violence in the Family and Sexual Assault, 7(3), 1-2 & 10-11.

This article describes a study which was designed to identify patterns of sexual abuse of patients in psychiatric settings and the institutional practices which contribute to the vulnerability of patients. The findings in this article were primarily derived from an analysis of 80 separate incidents of assaults reported by 26 former mental patients, and about 100 separate incidents reported by 39 facility staff. Among the disturbing findings of this study was that the assaults were most frequently perpetrated by male direct-care staff. That is, by the staff patients were most dependent on and with whom patients had the greatest amount of contact. Assaults by male patients against female patents tended to be violent rapes, while male staff assailants most often did not use direct force, instead many took advantage of opportunities when female patients were completely helpless, in restraints or heavily medicated. The author also provides a very insightful analysis of the institutional practices and structures which contribute to the vulnerability of inmates to sexual abuse.

This is the first article in a series of articles--based on the same research project--to be published in Response. People who are interested in learning more about this research project might want to trace these articles.

TITLE: Violence and sexual assault plague many disabled women

AUTHOR: O'Toole, C. J.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1990

New Directions for Women, January/February 1990, 17.

This article reports that recent research indicates that battering and sexual assault figures may be two or three times higher for women with disabilities than for other women. The article criticizes the general sexual assault and domestic violence programs for ignoring women with disabilities, and the disability community for not having been able to solve this problem. The author suggests ways generic sexual assault and domestic violence services can use to reach women with disabilities and describes a few successful attempts to include this group of women in generic programs.

TITLE: Harm's way: The many faces of violence and abuse against persons with disabilities

AUTHOR: Roeher Institute

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1995

Roeher Institute
Kinsmen Building, York University
4700 Keele Street
North York, Ontario M3J 1P3
CANADA

This study focused on violent or abusive circumstances experienced by people with disabilities and the impact of this on their lives. These circumstances include physical, sexual, emotional, and verbal abuse; denial of rights, necessities, privileges, and opportunities; and failure to respond to complaints of abuse and violence. The information for this study came from a Canadian survey of people with disabilities, and from interviews and focus groups with service providers, police, advocates, and family members. Also included as sources of information are a review of the literature on this topic and Canadian case law and statutes.

The author identifies factors which can contribute to such abuse, such as negative social stereotypes concerning disability and having caregivers who may lack adequate support and training. Also considered are issues of disclosure and identification of violence and abuse as well as responses (legal and otherwise) to the problem after it has been disclosed. Recommendations are offered for policy, program reform, statutory reform, providing information to concerned parties about the issue, and increased support from communities.

TITLE: Vulnerable: Sexual abuse and people with an intellectual handicap

AUTHOR: Senn, C. Y.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1988

The Roeher Institute
Kinsmen Building, York University Campus
4700 Keele Street
North York, Ontario M3J 1P3
CANADA

The author of this book claims that while sexual abuse has become a major issue in recent years, the sexual abuse of people with an intellectual handicap (i.e., mental retardation) has been virtually ignored in the public discussion and policy-making around the issue.

The author explores the myths surrounding sexual abuse and the myths surrounding people with mental retardation. The book focuses both on children and adults and the author shows how the myths surrounding disability contribute to the vulnerability of people with disabilities. This vulnerability seems to be well recognized, yet the author reports that it is almost impossible to get accurate measures of either prevalence or incidence of sexual abuse. Through a review of the literature which contributes to the understanding of sexual abuse of individuals with mental retardation the author suggests: (1) when sexual abuse is reported, 99% of the victims are assaulted by people known to them, (2) only 20% of assaults are reported, and (3) depending on the sampling and information gathering techniques used, estimates range from 25% to 83% of women, and up to 32% of men, with mental retardation have experienced sexual abuse. The author concludes that children with disabilities are at higher risk for sexual abuse than other children and adolescents, and that girls and women with disabilities are the most likely victims.

The author describes ways people with mental retardation use to indicate that they have been sexually abused and explores treatment and prevention issues. The book also addresses issues such as inaccessibility of services for individuals with mental retardation, offenders who have mental retardation, and legal issues in sexual abuse of children. The book concludes with recommendations to protect individuals with mental retardation from sexual abuse.

This book is, to the best of my knowledge, the first comprehensive study of sexual abuse of people with mental retardation.

TITLE: Violence and abuse in the lives of people with disabilities: The end of silent acceptance?

AUTHOR: Sobsey, D.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1994

Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company
P.O. Box 10624
Baltimore, MD 21285-0624

Sobsey's book is a comprehensive study of the issue of disability, violence, and abuse. Once a registered nurse in a facility for people labeled developmentally disabled, Sobsey begins his book with his own personal reflections on the incidence of abuse. Combining this personal narrative with research and a literature review makes this work a valuable resource.

The book is divided into two sections. The first, Understanding Abuse, covers research and conceptual models of abuse. He reviews almost 30 studies which examined the relationship between abuse and disability, and also supplies data on characteristics of victims and offenders of sexual abuse (i.e., age, gender, disability level, situation of the victim, and age, gender, and means of access of the offender). Also included in this section is a chapter on care giver abuse, which includes euthanasia, sterilization, institutionalization, slavery, and the use of drugs as a means of control. The last chapter in this section critiques the major models used to explain abuse

The second section of the book, Preventing Abuse, takes a multimodal approach to prevention. Suggestions on interventions include the individual, the care givers, the environment, law enforcement, and society at large. These suggestions are practical and useful, and also helpful ins the Appendix which includes names and addresses of people and agencies working in this field who can link interested people with valuable resources.

TITLE: Sexuality, disability, and abuse: An annotated bibliography

AUTHORS: Sobsey, D., Gray, S., Wells, D., Pyper, D., & Reimber-Heck, B.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1990

University of Alberta
Severe Disabilities Program
6-102 Education North
Edmonton, AB T6G 2G5
CANADA

This annotated bibliography lists literature from a wide range of disciplines and perspectives relevant to sexual assault and abuse of people with disabilities. It is an attempt to provide a comprehensive review of the literature in this area and lists research studies, position papers, program descriptions, clinical reports, and media accounts. This should be an excellent resource for anyone looking for materials on sexual assault and abuse of people with disabilities.

TITLE: Sexual assault and abuse of people with disabilities: Networking directory

AUTHOR: Sobsey, D., Wells, D., & Gray, S. (Eds.)

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1989

University of Alberta
Severe Disabilities Program
6-102 Education North
Edmonton, AB T6G 2G5
CANADA

This networking directory is intended to facilitate communication among people concerned about sexual abuse of children with disabilities, sexual assault of adults with disabilities, sexual assault of adults with disabilities, and other forms of sexual exploitation of individuals who have disabilities. This area of concern crosses a wide range of disciplines and a wide range of related topics. The directory reflects this by listing individuals representing a wide range of roles, disciplines, and interests.

The directory includes names, addresses, phone numbers, and brief descriptive information for each person listed. A number of indexes have also been included to assist the readers in locating the particular information they require.

The directory is not a comprehensive listing of people with this concern, and although the editors would have liked to include all individuals in North America, their location in Western Canada has resulted in over-representation of individuals from that area. Despite this geographical bias this directory should serve as a good starting point.

TITLE: Women in the mental health system

AUTHOR: Stefan, S.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION 1987

Update: The Mental Health Law Project, 6(4/5), 4-5.

In this short article the author points out that many of the problems confronting women in psychiatric settings are similar to those women face in society at large: sexual abuse and lack of control of their own bodies. But she claims that these problems are greatly magnified when a woman is institutionalized. An institution is by its very nature an authoritarian, hierarchical place where men exercise even more control than in the society outside the institution. Rape and sexual assault are major problems in many institutions. As an example she cites a survey conducted in Texas mental health facilities where the clients themselves ranked rape or sexual assault as the most serious area of abuse and neglect. Other specific issues facing women in the mental health system are related to pregnancy and mothering. Pregnant women are often given psychoactive drugs that may affect the fetus and there are reports of pregnant women who have been given electroconvulsive therapy. With regard to mothers she claims that the mental health system tends to separate women from their children rather than provide the supportive services they need to maintain the family unit. Evidence shows that some women, especially low-income women, avoid seeking treatment because they fear that their children will be taken away as a result.

Susan Stefan claims that both lawyers and mental health advocates have made little effort to address these issues systematically.

TITLE: Violence against women: Implications for mental health policy

AUTHOR: Walker, L. E.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1984

In L. E. Walker (Ed.), Women and mental health policy (pp. 197-206).

Sage Publications
P.O. Box 5084
Newbury Park, CA 91359

This chapter describes how the concern for women's safety from men's physical and sexual violence has been an important factor in promoting changes in mental health policies. The author provides a short historical overview of the responses to women who were victims of violence and sexual assaults and the increased awareness and recognition of the extent of violence and sexual abuse of women. The chapter outlines legal and psychological developments which have influenced a change in public policy. The author concludes that despite recent developments, the legal and the psychological systems still operate with sexist biases against women, especially those women who are victims of violence and sexual abuse.

TITLE: Talking about the best kept secret: Sexual abuse and children with disabilities

AUTHOR: Watson, J. D.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1984, September

The Exceptional Parent, 14, 16-20.

This article discusses sexual abuse of children with disabilities and outlines the following reasons why these children are more vulnerable to sexual abuse than other children: (1) they are more likely to be dependent on adults for physical and emotional care, (2) they are encouraged to be passive and compliant, (3) they lack information or experience about appropriate sexual behavior, (4) the reluctance of families and institutions to discuss sexual abuse. The author makes suggestions about how to prevent sexual abuse, and how to respond to actual or suspected abuse.

TITLE: Escaping from abuse: Unique issues for women with disabilities

AUTHOR: Womendez, C., & Schneiderman, K.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1991

Sexuality and Disability, 9(3), 273-279.

This article recounts the experiences of women with disabilities who have suffered physical abuse and who found help at a shelter called Finex House in Jamaica Plains, Massachusetts. These stories have been told in order to help other women with disabilities who may be in similar situations. Specific problems facing women with disabilities are addressed, such as the accessibility, self protection, and shortage of such shelters.

FURTHER RESOURCES:
Sexual Abuse

Sexuality and Disability

Human Sciences Press, 5th Floor
233 Spring Street,
New York, NY 10013

This journal is a good source of information about issues of sexuality and sexual abuse. The journal was published regularly for a number of years, but has been published irregularly since 1987.

Response to Violence in the Family and Sexual Assault

4136 Leland Street
Chevy Chase, MD 20815
(301) 951-0039

This journal frequently contains articles and resources on sexual abuse and violence against women and children.

University of Alberta: Sexual Abuse Prevention Project

6-102 Education North
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2G5
CANADA
(403) 492-3755

One of the research projects at the University of Alberta is a study of sexual abuse of people with disabilities. Project staff have compiled a wealth of information and have published an extensive annotated bibliography on sexual abuse and a networking directory (both reviewed earlier in this section).

The project has also collected and analyzed cases of sexual abuse of people with disabilities, and are in the process of identifying and developing improved methods for abuse prevention, detection, reporting, and treatment. Additionally, the project intends to prepare model protocols for police, social services, educational, health care, and a number of other key community agencies. For more information contact Dick Sobsey at the address above.

FICTION

Fiction portraying women and girls with disabilities in a positive way is very rare. Although a number of women with disabilities have written about their experiences they have rarely transformed these writings into fiction or drama. Non-disabled authors have, with a few exceptions, had the tendency to portray women with disabilities in stereotypical roles where the disability overpowers all other characteristics. The books listed below provide positive images of women and girls with disabilities. These books portray women with disabilities as women living their lives as lovers, friends, and family members. That is, as regular women where the disability is only one of their characteristics. This section also lists two articles that discuss the image of women with disabilities in fiction and drama. Also listed are children's books that portray girls with disabilities in a positive way.

TITLE: In this sign

AUTHOR: Greenberg, J.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1970

Holt, Rinehart & Winston
111 5th Avenue
New York, NY 10003

A novel about a deaf couple. The novel traces their lives from young adulthood to the wife's retirement from seamstress work. The story describes how their deafness influences their lives and what impact it has on their daughter and their grandchildren. A very powerful story.

TITLE: Darlene

AUTHOR: Greenfield, E.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1980

Methuen
29 West 35th Street
New York, NY 10001

This is a children's story about a little girl named Darlene, who uses a wheelchair. She is spending a morning with her uncle and cousin and is feeling homesick. Darlene resists her cousin's attempts to play with her, but finally becomes absorbed in games and in the uncle's guitar playing. When her mother arrives, Darlene doesn't want to go home.

Darlene is an unusual book for a number of reasons: the little girl's disability is secondary to the plot; it portrays a black family, and it has a male caregiver as one of the main characters. The book is illustrated by George Ford.

TITLE: Good morning, Fanny. Good night, Fanny

AUTHOR: Hearn, E.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1984

Canada Women's Press
517 College, Suite 233
Toronto, ON M6G 4A2
CANADA

This is a children's story about Fanny, a lively youngster who enjoys 'zipping' around in her wheelchair. Another character in the book is Ting, Fanny's friend. The two girls have many adventures together in the park. Colorful, multicultural pictures by Mark Thurman add a great deal to this story.

TITLE: Not in the calendar

AUTHOR: Kennedy, M.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1964

The MacMillan Publishing Co.
866 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10022

This novel traces the lives of two women, one who is deaf and one who is hearing. It describes their lives and friendship from the 1880s till the late 1930s and covers far more than just disability related issues. The book is out of print and hard to find except in libraries. This is such a good book that it is worth a considerable effort to obtain it.

TITLE: Belonging

AUTHOR: Kent, D.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1978

New York: Dial.

This is a story for junior high school readers. It tells the story of a girl who is blind and struggles to find her place in a suburban high school where she is the first and only student with a disability. This book has been a favorite with many adolescents and adults who have read it, for it recalls vividly the difficulties encountered in trying to establish a genuine sense of belonging.

TITLE: Disabled women: Portraits in fiction and drama

AUTHOR: Kent, D.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1987

In A. Gartner & J. Joe (Eds.), Images of the disabled, disabling images (pp 47-63).

Praeger Publishers
383 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10017

In this chapter Deborah Kent, who herself has a disability, looks at the ways women with disabilities have been portrayed in plays and novels, to determine whether the image which literature conveys is overwhelmingly negative. Her conclusion is that writers, like most other people, seem to see the disability before anything else when they portray a woman with a disability. Few authors manage to portray the person behind the disability. In all instances, the disability determines the woman's interaction with other people. The competencies and capabilities, education and personality of women with disabilities have little effect on the attitudes towards her. 'Disability seems to undermine the very roots of her womanhood' (p. 63). Kent concludes that only a few writers have managed to create works that show women with disabilities as total persons who are capable of the full range of human experiences and emotions.

TITLE: In search of a heroine: Images of women with disabilities in fiction and drama

AUTHOR: Kent, D.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1988

In M. Fine & A. Asch (Eds.), Women with disabilities: Essays in psychology, culture, and politics (pp. 90-110).

Temple University Press
Broad and Oxford Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19122

Using her own search for identity as a framework, Deborah Kent describes her childhood and adult reactions to literary portrayals of women with disabilities. She contrasts negative and devalued stereotypes with more positive images of women with disabilities leading meaningful full lives. Kent points out how important the identification with female character in the literature is for the emotional development and emerging self-image of young women. She claims that although it is hard for women in general to find heroines in the literature, this is even harder for women with disabilities. Most fiction where a woman with a disability is a character portrays the negative stereotype of a helpless, dependent, pitiable and undesirable woman. Kent concludes with a call to women with disabilities to start writing fiction that provides a more positive image of women and girls with disabilities.

TITLE: A button in her ear

AUTHOR: Litchfield, A. B.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1976

Albert Whitman & Co.
5747 West Howard Street
Niles, IL 60648

This children's story is about Angela, who has a hearing impairment. It describes how Angela misunderstands what she hears until she gets a hearing aid. The reader joins Angela in a visit to a hearing specialist and in playing baseball with her friends. The book has softly colored black and white illustrations by Elanor Hill.

TITLE: A cane in her hand

AUTHOR: Litchfield, A. B.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1977

Albert Whitman & Co.
5747 West Howard Street
Niles, IL 60648

This children's story is about Valerie, who has a visual impairment. The story describes how Valerie learns to use a long cane so she will not bump into things any more. The story describes Valerie's visit to the eye doctor, joins her in school, and with her friends. The book is illustrated by Eleanor Mill.

TITLE: Listen for the fig tree

AUTHOR: Matthis, S. B.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1974

Dutton, Inc.
2 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10016

This book describes one week in the life of a 16 year old African American girl who is blind. The story describes her family problems and her relationships with friends and boyfriend, as well as her struggle with her identity as a African American person. This is among the best books featuring a character who has a disability. A very good book for young people.

TITLE: Despite this flesh: The disabled in stories and poems

AUTHOR: Miller, V. (Ed.)

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1985

University of Texas Press
P.O. Box 7819
Austin, TX 78713

This is a literary anthology by forty-five women and men with disabilities.

TITLE: I have a sister. My sister is deaf

AUTHOR: Peterson, J. W.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1984

Harper & Row
10 East 53rd Street
New York, NY 10022

This children's story talks about what it is like to have a sister who is deaf and provide information about how a deaf girl communicates with her family and friends. The sisters are shown doing many things together, and there is a good balance between what the sister who is deaf can and cannot do. The book is illustrated by Debora Ray.

TITLE: The balancing girl

AUTHOR: Rabe, B.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1981

E.P. Dutton
Two Park Avenue
New York, NY 10016

This is a children's story about a girl who uses a wheelchair and goes to a regular first-grade class. The story tells about the many things she can do and her particular talent for balancing all kinds of objects. The girl is portrayed in a very positive light. The book has illustrations by Lillian Hoban.

TITLE: My friend Leslie

AUTHOR: Rosenberg, M. B.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1983

New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard

In this children's story Karen tells us about her friend Leslie, a classmate who has multiple disabilities. The story describes a typical day in school, including all the activities that Leslie, Karen, and the other children do. Leslie is shown working independently as well as accepting assistance from her peers. The story also describes the accommodations that are made to enable Leslie to participate fully. The book is illustrated with photographs by George Ancona.

TITLE: My favorite place

AUTHORS: Sargent, S., & Wirt, D. A.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1983

Abingdon Press
201 Eighth Street, South
Nashville, TN 37202

This children's story is full of the multisensory experiences of a child's trip to the ocean. It is not until the end that the reader learns that the little girl in the story is blind. The book is illustrated by Allan Eitzen.

TITLE: With wings: An anthology of literature by and about women with disabilities

AUTHOR: Saxton, M. & Howe, F. (Eds.)

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1987

New York: The Feminist Press.

This is a collection of literary writings by and about women with disabilities. This anthology of essays, stories, and poetry conveys the experiences and feelings of women with disabilities. Among the 30 contributors to this book are such well-known names as Alice Walker, Adrienne Rich, Muriel Rukeyser, Vassar Miller, Nancy Mairs, Laurel Lee and Mary Wilkins Freeman. A powerful and moving book about the strengths, the struggle, the dignity, the intelligence, the humanity, and the courage of women with disabilities.

TITLE: The body's memory

AUTHOR: Stewart, J.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1989

St. Martin's Press
175 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10010

In this novel, Jean Stewart, interweaves poetry and prose around the story of a woman who becomes physically disabled because of cancer. The book starts with her very personal journals of the emotional strain and develops into her awakening to the injustices done against her and other people with disabilities. A passionate comment on what it means to have a disability and perhaps the first novel that evolves around disability rights. The author has a disability and has been active in the disability rights movement for a long time.

FURTHER RESOURCES ON LITERATURE AND FINE ARTS

Kaleidoscope
The international literary & fine arts
magazine by persons with disabilities

326 Locust Street
Akron, OH 44302

Kaleidoscope is an international literary and fine art magazine which focuses on issues inherent to the experience of disability and the arts. The magazine is published semi-annually, and although it always contains materials by women and men with disabilities, it is worth mentioning that the spring issue of 1985 (number 10) is largely devoted to women with disabilities. This issue contains an article about women with disabilities as writers and artists, and a number of short stories and poems by women with disabilities.

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PART III

TEACHING OTHERS: An Annotated Listing of Resources and Teaching Materials About Women and Girls with Disabilities

The lack of opportunities to learn about what it means to have a disability has resulted in widespread ignorance about people with disabilities in general, and women with disabilities in particular. This part of the information package is designed to assist those who want to teach others about women and girls with disabilities. It contains an annotated listing of teaching materials designed to use in schools as well as in organizations and meetings such as women's meetings and within disability organizations.

The materials listed include information about disability issues as well as practical guidelines and information about how to present the material; how to set up workshops on women with disabilities; suggestions for teaching activities for use in classrooms; and so on. This section also lists resources for setting up accessible meetings and workshops.

TEACHING MATERIALS

TITLE: Mainstreaming for equity

AUTHOR: Educational Equity Concepts

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1988

Educational Equity Concepts
114 East 32nd Street
New York, NY 10016

These teaching materials are intended to help extend the curriculum to incorporate information about disability and are intended for all children, with and without disabilities, in kindergarten through sixth grate. The materials consist of activity and resource kits, including hands-on materials such as books, photos, games, and wooden figures, as well as step-by-step curriculum guide that contains ideas for activities and projects. In addition there are sets of three posters depicting children and adults with and without disabilities at home, in school, and in the community. Also available are the following two resources for people using these materials: (1) a videotape which introduces the materials and activities, including actual classroom examples, and (2) an accompanying staff development guide which provides information about how to introduce ideas to staff and to explore attitudes about disabilities.

Although not specifically focusing on women and girls with disabilities, these materials are multicultural and free of gender stereotyping.

TITLE: Including all of us: An early childhood curriculum about disability

AUTHOR: Froschil, M., Colon, L., Rubin, E., & Sprung, B.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1984

Educational Equity Concepts
114 East 32nd Street
New York, NY 10016

This is a guide to create an early childhood curriculum that is inclusive; one that is nonsexist, multicultural, and incorporates both images and actual role models of children and adults with disabilities. The guide outlines an inclusive approach to teaching that expands children's world views to include people with disabilities, celebrates individual differences, and teaches appreciation of and respect for human differences.

The curriculum guide starts out by providing information about disabilities, such as disability rights legislation, and rationales for incorporating disability awareness into the curriculum. It describes how an inclusive curriculum can be incorporated into the standard early childhood curriculum, and focuses on three traditional preschool units: Same/Different, Body Parts, and Transportation. Each unit incorporates one disability: hearing impairment in Same/Different, visual impairment in Body Parts, and mobility impairment in Transportation. The last part of the guide is an annotated bibliography listing resources for creating an inclusive classroom environment. Listed are, among other things, curriculum materials, children's books, background readings for teachers and parents, and information about disabilities.

TITLE: You CAN serve disabled young women

AUTHOR: The Networking Project for Young Adults with Disabilities

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1989

The Networking Project for Young Adults
with Disabilities
YWCA of the City of New York
610 Lexington Avenue
New York, NY 10022

This is a set of sex training modules designed to help staff at community agencies include disabled young women into their settings. Topics covered include: Consciousness-Raising on Women and Disability; Personal and Professional Issues; Independent Living Issues for Disabled Young Women; Career Explorations; Sexuality Issues; and the Use of Role Models as a Programmatic Strategy. The modules are designed to be conducted in one-hour sessions and can be used in various combinations, depending upon the needs of the agency.

TITLE: Women and girls with disabilities: An introductory teaching packet

AUTHOR: Phillips, E.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1986

Organization for Equal Education of the Sexes, Inc.
438 Fourth Street
Brooklyn, NY 11215

This information packet is intended as a starting point for elementary and secondary teachers to introduce their students to the experiences and lives of women and girls with disabilities. The material is designed to be used by teachers with little or no experience in teaching about women with disabilities as well as those who are knowledgeable about the issues. The introductory section gives a brief description of the disability rights movement and the impact of attitudinal barriers on the lives of people with disabilities. The following sections address the specific issues and barriers women with disabilities face because of their double disadvantage of having a disability and being a female. These sections offer statistics about the education, employment, and earnings of women and men with disabilities.

The packet contains suggestions about how to introduce the subject of disability and women, as well as suggestions about specific classroom activities. These activities are intended for use with non-disabled students as well as with students who have disabilities. The author also points out that disability issues need not be studied as an isolated topic and gives examples about how issues of disability can be integrated into the general curriculum.

The author emphasizes the need for role models for all young people with disabilities and the long standing scarcity of such role models for girls with disabilities. The packet includes a section with short biographical paragraphs on women with disabilities who can serve as role models. The packet concludes with a resource list with selected listing of readings for children, adolescents, and adults.

This packet contains very practical material and should be helpful for teachers who want to introduce issues of disability and gender in their classrooms. The lessons and activities described in the packet do not require purchase of any additional materials. Although brief this packet conveys strong, positive attitudes toward people with disabilities in general, and toward women with disabilities in particular.

TITLE: Building community: A manual exploring issues of women and disability

AUTHOR: Women and Disability Awareness Project

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1989

Educational Equity Concepts
114 East 32 Street
New York, NY 10016

This manual examines the connection between discrimination based on gender and discrimination based on disability, and addresses disability as a political issue; civil rights issue; as a human relations issue; and as a personal experience. It is intended to build community between diverse groups. The authors point out that the lack of opportunities within schools and organizations to learn about what it means to be a person with a disability results in widespread ignorance about people with disabilities. The authors intend the manual partly for use in schools as a general introduction to the topic, for teachers as well as students, and partly for used within women's organizations to raise general awareness about issues faced by women with disabilities and strategies to meet the needs of women with disabilities within the organizations. In disability rights organizations the manual could serve to raise awareness about the particular needs of women with disabilities and how their lives and experiences differ from those of men with disabilities. In both women's and disability organizations the manual can be used to train staff as well as to inform the general membership about the connection between discrimination based on gender and disability.

The manual contains background information on disability rights issues and about women and girls with disabilities, an annotated bibliography and selected readings about women with disabilities. Lastly, the manual contains very practical guidelines and materials to conduct workshops on women with disabilities, including workshop formats that will allow activists, educators, and other trainers to explore disability issues in a wide variety of settings. This is a very practical and informing manual for anyone interested in the connection between gender and disability.

This manual was first published in 1984. The 1989 education has been expanded to include the specific needs of young women with disabilities.

OTHER TEACHING MATERIALS:
General

Educational Equity Concepts
114 East 32nd Street
New York, NY 10016
(212) 725-1803

This nonprofit organization was founded to foster equal educational opportunity. The organization designs innovative programs and materials to help eliminate sex, race, and disability bias. Their teaching materials span early childhood, elementary, young adult, and community education. Some of these materials have been included in this information package, but those who are looking for teaching materials about women and disability should contact this organization for a complete listing of their materials.

OTHER TEACHING MATERIALS:
Films

The films listed in this section are listed in alphabetic order by title. Most of them have not been prescreened and should therefore be screened before they are shown. The films have been included here because they were recommended by knowledgeable people as portraying strong positive images of women with disabilities and a realistic picture of their lives.

The Disabled Women's Theatre Project

Women Make Movies/Box SE
225 Lafayette Street
New York, NY 10012
(212) 925-0606

This 60 minute videotape is written, performed and produced by women with physical disabilities. Using dance, comedy and dream, The Disabled Women's Theater Project conveys some joyful, absurd, and painful moments in the lives of women with disabilities.

Don't go to your room... and other affirmations of empowerment for women with disabilities

Access Oregon
The Center for Independent Living
2600 S.E. Belmont, Suite A
Portland, Oregon 97214
(503) 232-7411

This one-hour videotape addresses the double barrier of being a woman and having a disability. Over a dozed women talk openly about issues they face in employment, relationships, sexuality, abuse, health, mothering, and in empowering themselves.

From...disabled to abled: Developmentally disabled women

University Media Services
California State University, Sacramento
6000 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95819
(916) 278-5763
(916) 278-5760

This 28 minute video tells the story of three women with developmental disabilities who have taken charge over their lives. The women describe their struggles for independence and their efforts to overcome disability and discrimination. They also discuss marriage, motherhood, victimization, victories, dreams, and desires.

The impossible takes a little longer

Indiana University
Audio Visual Center
Bloomington, IN 47405-5901
(812) 855-4111

This 46 minute video is produced by the National Film Board of Canada and presents the stories of four highly accomplished women who have physical, visual, and hearing impairments. The film describes these women's professional and personal lives and how they have developed creative solutions to difficulties in the work place and in the home.

Positive images: Portraits of women with disabilities

Women Make Movies/Box SE
225 Lafayette Street
New York, NY 10012
(212) 925-0606

This 59-minute videotape about women with disabilities is designed to provide positive, realistic picture of the lives of women with disabilities and the social, economic, and political issues they face. The videotape focuses on three strong and articulate women who discuss sexuality, relationships, societal attitudes, family life, motherhood, education, and career. These women offer crucial role models for women and girls with disabilities. Positive Images identifies disability as an issue of concerns to all women.

OTHER TEACHING MATERIALS:
Posters

Organization for Equal Education of the Sexes
808 Union Street
Brooklyn, NY 11215
(718) 783-0332

This is a non-profit organization established to develop, publish, and disseminate materials and information in support of equal education for the sexes. Among the things this organization has available are posters offering positive images of women of different race and ethnic groups, as well as women with disabilities. For example, one group of posters, 'Women of Achievement,' honors women who deserve recognition for their contributions. Brief biographies come with each poster. Another group of posters is 'Women at Work,' demonstrating women's active and productive participation in a wide variety of jobs. Short biographies or other teaching aides accompany most of these posters. Some of the posters include women with disabilities. It is quite unusual to find women with disabilities portrayed in as positive ways as in these posters. For a catalog of these and other posters write to the address above.

OTHER TEACHING MATERIALS:
Consultation & Training

Those who want to teach others about women and girls with disabilities will find that it is not easy to locate materials or resource people to assist them. Listed below are two organizations that offers training, consultation, and technical assistance in this area.

Educational Equity Concepts
114 East 32nd Street
New York, NY 10016
(212) 725-1803

Educational Equity Concepts offers training and consultation about disability issues at all age levels: early childhood, elementary, teens, and women with disabilities. All training and consultation includes a discussion about the connections between bias due to gender, race/ethnicity, and disability. Among the training/consultation services offered by Educational Equity Concepts are: staff development and in-service training courses; workshops for parents, schools, and community groups; material development (manuals, reports, audio-visuals); keynote addresses, speeches, and presentations; and conference planning.

The Project on Women and Disability
One Ashburton Place
Room 1305
Boston, MA 02108

Contact person:
Marsha Saxton, Director
(617) 727-7440 or 1-800-322-2020

The Project on Women and Disability offers consultation and training on the issues of women and disability. The training focuses on: 1) exploration of cultural attitudes and behaviors about disability and how they impact on women; 2) discussion of current trends in reproductive technologies, especially pre-natal screening and neonatal care, and their implications for the Disability Rights Movement; 3) an overview of the growing literature by and about women with disabilities; and 4) strategies for change.

The Project also seeks to give women with disabilities a stronger voice by creating a forum for women with disabilities to speak out on issues of importance to them, network with others, and develop their own groups and organizations both within other existing groups and independently. The Project provides education about the life experiences and needs of women with disabilities and training in accessibility and attitudinal sensitivity. It also provides education, training, and resources to those individuals and groups of women who, by virtue of their work and relationships to people with disabilities, are in strong positions to affect positive change. This group includes family members of people with disabilities, health care workers, educators, and human service workers.

OTHER TEACHING MATERIALS:
Accessibility

Accessibility to meetings and conferences is one of the major problems facing people with disabilities. For example, many women with disabilities complain bitterly that women's meetings are not accessible for them. When the issue of accessibility is raised most people think of wheelchair accessibility. Those who organize meetings and workshops are usually very willing to make sure that the events they are planning are wheelchair accessible, but they do not know what to look for to make sure that a place is accessible. Listed below are two practical manuals to help people set up wheelchair accessible meetings and what to look for to make sure a place is accessible for people in wheelchairs. People can also turn to their local Independent Living Center or other disability groups for assistance.

Although the physical barriers are the ones most commonly mentioned, there are also other accessibility issues such as making workshop material accessible for people with disabilities. For example, deaf people need sign language interpreters to be able to participate in workshops and meetings. As a matter of policy, all invitations that are sent out to participants in advance should ask people to indicate if they need sign language interpreters, child care, or have other special needs.

TITLE: The planner's guide to barrier free meetings

AUTHOR: Barrier Free Environments, Inc., and Harold Russell Associates, Inc.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1980

Barrier Free Environments
P.O. Box 30634
Raleigh, NC 27622

This is a very practical guide for those who are planning accessible meetings. It addresses issues such as advance planning, access to the site, arrangements in meeting rooms, as well as in bedrooms, and is illustrated with numerous drawings. The guide also provides an overview of legal issues on accessibility and a list of resources.

TITLE: Manual for accessibility

AUTHOR: National Rehabilitation Association

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1986

National Rehabilitation Association
633 South Washington Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 836-0850

This is a practical manual to help people find out when a place is accessible.

PART IV

BUILDING CONNECTIONS:
Where to Find Further Resources
For and About Women with Disabilities

This part of this information package lists various resources that have not been covered in other part of the package. The list is by no means exhaustive but includes some very important resources for and about women with disabilities to assist them build connections with each other as well as connecting with other people. This part includes information about where to find services and support groups for women with disabilities; where to find feminist materials in Braille or on tape; lists some of the journals and newsletters that focus on, or regularly include, issues of importance to women with disabilities; and lists some of the feminist organizations that have attempted to include women with disabilities.

SERVICES AND SUPPORT GROUPS

TITLE: Bridging the gap: A national directory of services for women and girls with disabilities

AUTHOR: National Clearinghouse on Women and Girls with Disabilities

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1990

Educational Equity Concepts
114 East 32nd Street
New York, NY: 10016

The National Clearinghouse on Women and Girls with Disabilities has compiled a national directory of services and support groups for women and girls with disabilities. This document contains more than three hundred listings of organizations that provide services to meet the needs of women and/or girls with disabilities. Each entry includes the agency's or organization's name, address, telephone number, contact person, region served, date established, whether they respond to inquiries by phone or by mail, if they have a newsletter, and a brief description of their programs and services. The services included in this directory cover a wide range of areas of importance for women with disabilities such as educational services and offices of disability services at universities; support groups and other self-help groups for women with disabilities; government and non-government organizations focusing on or including women with disabilities; generic services which also provide services for women with disabilities such as rape crises and planned parenthood; and more. This is a unique directory that will be of extreme importance for women with disabilities in terms of breaking the isolation they so often experience and helping them find appropriate services and supports. As the first national directory of services and support groups for women with disabilities, it will undoubtedly serve to help women with disabilities find each other and build connections.

NETWORKING

This section lists resources for those who are interested in starting a networking or mentoring projects for women or girls with disabilities. The resources listed here have all been developed by the Networking Project for Disabled Women and Girls in New York City.

Networking Project for Young Adults with Disabilities
YWCA of the City of New York
610 Lexington Avenue
New York, NY 10022
(212) 735-9766

This project was originally started in 1984 by Harilyn Rousso and is run by the YWCA in New York City. The project is designed to address the lack of visible role models for girls and women with disabilities. It involves the development of a network of successful women with disabilities from a wide range of occupational fields and the use of this network to provide role models for young women with disabilities.

The Networking Project has recently added several new components designed to enable young women with disabilities to take their rightful place in society as independent productive adults. Among these are an advocacy training program, a pre-employment training program, and a support group providing information and networking opportunities to women with disabilities ages 20-30 who are making the transition to adulthood.

The Networking Project is among the first of its type in the country and has served as a model for other networking and mentoring projects across the nation. Networking Project staff offer consultation for those who are interested in establishing networking/mentoring projects in their own communities and have available resource and training materials to assist people.

TITLE: Mentoring empowers: How to start a networking project in your community

AUTHOR: Rousso, H.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION: 1988

The Networking Project for
Disabled Women and Girls
YWCA of the City of New York
610 Lexington Avenue
New York, NY 10022

The information in this manual is compiled by Harilyn Rousso who founded and directed the first networking project in New York City. The manual is intended to assist those who would like to start a networking project for women and girls with disabilities in their communities. It provides a description of the original Networking Project, its history and philosophy, and describes how other communities have replicated the project. The manual also provides guidelines on how to start a networking project, including how to establish a diverse network of women with disabilities, how to set up a community advisory board, how to organize networking conferences, and follow-up mentoring activities. The packet concludes with an extensive list of resources including materials developed by the Networking Project, and an extended collection of sample documents to get a project off the ground such as outreach letters, program agendas, and training curricula from the original project in New York City. This is a very practical guide for those who are interested in starting a networking/mentoring project.

Networking Across the Generations:
A Conference for Disabled Women and Girls

The Networking Project for Disabled Women and Girls
YWCA of the City of New York
610 Lexington Avenue
New York, NY 10022
(212) 735-9766

A twenty-minute videotape that offers an introduction to the Networking Project by presenting highlights from one of the New York project's first events, 'A Networking Conference for Disabled Women and Girls,' held in November 1984. This videotape also provides an overview of some of the issues facing women with disabilities in today's society.

ORGANIZATIONS

The organizations listed below are two major women's organizations that have made an effort to include women with disabilities.

National Women's History Project
7738 Bell Road
Windsor, CA 95492
(707) 838-6000

This organization was established in 1981 as an educational nonprofit corporation to promote multicultural study of women's history in schools. Their women's history resource service has available a wealth of resources about women's history including books, posters, and curriculum materials. The NWHP Resource Service Catalog contains more than 300 items that are both intended for children and adults. This organization has attempted to include resources about women with disabilities in their resource catalog and address issues of importance to women with disabilities at their conferences.

National Women's Studies Association
University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20742-1325
(301) 454-3757

NWSA is one of the feminist associations which has made an effort to include women with disabilities. NWSA has a Disability Caucus which keeps up with issues of importance to women with disabilities and brings these issues to the attention of the Association. Members of the Disability Caucus also make sure that NWSA national conferences are accessible to women with disabilities. The contact person for NWSA Disability Caucus is Evee L Smith. You can get more information by writing or calling her: P.O. Box 1339, Corvallis, Oregon 97339, Telephone: (503) 757-1503 or (503) 737-3628. You can also contact NWSA headquarters at the address above.

JOURNALS AND PERIODICALS

Listed below are journals and newsletters that focus solely on women with disabilities as well as periodicals that regularly include issues of gender and disability. Most of these periodicals are available in print, on tape, or in Braille. Although this is not an exhaustive list of periodicals it will hopefully be helpful for those who are looking for journals and newsletters that regularly include women with disabilities.

The Ragged Edge
(formerly The Disability Rag)

The Advocado Press
P.O. Box 145
Louisville, KY 40201

The Ragged Edge (formerly The Disability Rag) is a monthly disability journal that regularly includes issues of importance to women with disabilities. This is a progressive, action oriented periodical which includes information about nationwide grass roots actions for change. A good journal for activists and people committed to disability rights.

Disability Studies Quarterly
Suffolk University
Sawyer School of Management
Department of Public Management
Eight Asburton Place
Boston, MA 02108-2770

Every issue of this disability newsletter contains a wealth of information about research, recent books, films, grants, conferences, and other resources. This newsletter regularly includes information relevant to women with disabilities and has published two theme issues on women with disabilities. The newsletter takes an interdisciplinary approach to disability studies.

Dykes, Disability, & Stuff
P.O. Box 6194
Boston, MA 02114

Dykes, Disability, & Stuff is a quarterly newsletter devoted to issues of importance to women who have disabilities, especially lesbian women with disabilities. This is an action oriented grassroots newsletter. The subscription is on an inclusive sliding scale in order to make it available to women who have fixed income. The aim is to make DD&S available free to women in institutions.

New Directions for Women
108 West Palisade Avenue
Englewood, NJ 07631
(201) 568-0226

New Directions for Women is a feminist newsletter published six times a year covering a wide range of issues of importance to women. The newsletter frequently includes articles and resources of importance to women with disabilities. A very good newsletter that keeps up with what is going on in the women's movement as well as keeping track of issues that affect women's lives.

Off Our Backs
1724 20th Street N.W.
Washington, DC 2009

Off Our Backs is a feminist newsletter published eleven times a year. This is a grassroots newsletter that covers a wide range of issues and regularly includes articles and other materials by and about women with disabilities.

Complete Elegance
&
Sisters
719 Second Avenue North
Seattle, WA 98109

These two journals are published by Re-Evaluation Counseling. They contain articles on counseling theory and practice. Many contributors to these journals write about their experiences with regard to liberation from oppression and internalized oppression. Complete Elegance is devoted to disability issues, and Sisters is the women's journal which frequently includes articles on women and disability.

FURTHER RESOURCES:
Building Connections

Womyn's Braille Press, Inc.
P.O. Box 8475
Minneapolis, MN 55408
(612) 822-0549

The Womyn's Braille Press, offers feminist literature in print, on tape, and in braille. Their tape library contains a number of titles, and the press regularly circulates several feminist periodicals on cassette. It also publishes a quarterly newsletter, Womyn's Braille Press Newsletter, in braille or on tape that covers many issues of interest to women with disabilities. Subscription to the newsletter is on a sliding fee scale.

PART V

WORLD WIDE WEB PAGES

This final section lists some addresses from the World Wide Web which deal with issues regarding women and disabilities. This is not a comprehensive list, but they are good starting points.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT WOMEN AND DISABILITIES

Women's Resources
http://www.nchrtm.okstate.edu.webfiles/women.html

The Hub
http://www.inch.com/~dog666/hub/Women.html

Information for people who use wheelchairs. Provides resources specifically for women with disabilities and includes a short list of books on women with disabilities.

Meeting the Needs of Women with Disabilities:
A Blueprint for Change
http://www.naric.com/naric/nidrr95/7/H133G40077.a.html

This is a project to document the unmet needs of women with disabilities in mainstream social service systems. Represents various cultural and economic perspectives. Also identifies model programs and practices.

For More Information Contact:
Berkeley Planning Associates
440 Grand Avenue, Suite 500
Oakland, CA 94610
email: ann@bpacal.com

Metro Area Women with Disabilities in Halifax
http://www.cfn.cs.dal.ca/Libraries/HCRL/communityDB/MAWD.html

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The Resource Centre - Nova Scotia Advisory Council
on the Status of Women
http://www.gov.ns.ca/govt/staw/rchom.htm

This site houses a variety of topics by, for, and about women. Subjects cover such areas as violence, law, health, employment, etc. Also includes collections on specialized populations of women such as adolescence, black, native, immigrant, women with disabilities, and lesbians.

The Center for Research on Women with Disabilities (CROWD)
http://www.bcm.tmc.edu/crowd/index.html

Related to health, aging, civil rights, abuse, and independent living.

University of Georgia Women's Studies Program
http://www.uga.edu/~wsp/reading.html

Lists books and other publications about women with disabilities.

HEALTH ISSUES

KGTV-Staying Healthy - A Women's Place
http://www.kgtv.com/10news/Stayhealthy/place.htm

For more information contact:
Health Resource Center for Women with Disabilities
Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago
Chicago, IL 60611
(312) 908-7997

SEXUALITY

Dykes, Disabilities & Stuff
http://tps.stdorg.wisc.edu/MGLRC/Groups/DykesDisabilitiesStuff.html

Devoted to the health and disability concerns of lesbians.

For Further Information:
P.O. Box 8773
Madison, WI 53708

POLITICS

Disabled Women's Alliance
http://www.igc.org/beijing/ngo/widnet.html

Network of politically active women from the United States and Canada which is diverse in terms of race, age, and disability.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Confronting Violence Against Women
http://indie.ca/abilities/magazine/womenT.html

Niagara Regional Policy - Support Services with the Community
Working Against Violence in Our Community: Abuse of the
Disabled: Violence Against Women with Disabilities

http://www.nrps.com/nrpsweb/disabled.htm